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Jazzletter

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It's a Fine Scheme

I wrote a little ditty, that I thought was very pretty,
And I sent it to a New York music firm;
They wrote back, in manner nifty, they would publish it for fifty,
And they pointed out the money I could earn.
Yes, they showed me how to do it, said I'd never, never rue it,
And when I sold five hundred copies, see!
(After all my money blowin', if the song showed signs of goin'),
They would push it then and pay me royalty.

CHORUS

It's a fine scheme — for some one —
But that some one isn't me;
Write a song, then push it along,
And pay fifty bucks for the privilege, oh gee!
I suppose the publisher worries and frets,
And uneasy he wears his hat,
For look at the "risk" that the publisher "takes"
When he gets out a song like that.

I wrote back I was thrifty, that I guessed I'd keep my fifty,
And I wasn't quite the guy they took me for;
Then I wrote, Send back the ditty that I thought so very pretty,
And I really wouldn't be the least bit sore.
Say, on the quiet, ain't it funny, how some people scheme for money,
And how others throw their money away,
But this music scheme's the limit — say, there's only one man in it,
That's the publisher, and here I'd like to say:

CHORUS

Ottie E. Colburn, Brockton, Mass.

The foregoing appeared in American Musician *January 29, 1910. It was drawn to our attention by Art Koenig. God knows who poor old Ottie E. Colburn was, but his heartfelt lament deserves a moment of silence.*

Thanks

To everyone who wrote or phoned to express their concern during the Ojai fires of July. As it happened, I wasn't even here. I was in Long Island, recording an album of our songs with Roger Kellaway for Gerry Mcdonald's Choice label, and, like everyone else, I watched the fires on television. I finally reached my wife on the phone. Knowing we were recording, she seriously understated the danger.

The fires were the result of arson — six incendiary devices were found. And the valley was literally ringed with fire. My wife and a friend of ours who was visiting from Mexico kept a hose playing on the roof and the garden all one night as the ashes and glowing cinders fell. The firefighters, who came here from all over the country, did a sensational job. The work of firefighters is not always appreciated, but these firefighters were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love from the community. There were signs everyone saying, one way or another, Thank you firefighters for saving our town. People opened their homes and swimming pools to them, and nearly engulfed them in food and orange juice. They said they had never seen such behavior from a town.

I got home a few days later and drove around in these magnificent mountains, appalled at the endless acres of black skeletons of trees and shrubs and the gray ash on the ground, the bare mountain slopes that will come thundering down as mud and debris when the rains hit next winter. The damage is awesome. We, fortunately, were not touched.

Letters

You have the greatest way of saying things that most of us think about but don't know how to express in words. And I enjoy the writing of the other contributors, such as Bobby Scott, Dick Sudhalter, and Michael Zwerin. All of you orchestrate so well.

To me, reading the *Jazzletter* is like listening to the Singers Unlimited, a chart by Robert Farnon, an original by Claus Ogerman. It is such a pleasure to hear your words with my eyes. Without you, this whole music scene would have remained in a state of complete waste. I too have accidentally gone into Gadgets in New York. Playing bass with Liberace, we use *live* musicians wherever we go, and today that means a great deal to me. So keep doing your thing, man, because, believe me, it is not in vain.

Ralph Enriquez, Las Vegas, Nevada

A Journey to Cologne

Part II

I hadn't been in Europe in fifteen years when I walked into the terminal building at Linate airport outside Milan that January afternoon. The first things I noticed were the machine guns and the dogs. Neat little machine guns. Combat analyses from World War II showed that most killing is done in distances of less than twenty-five feet. Short-barrel weapons are less accurate than long but given the intimacy of modern killing, accuracy doesn't count for much. And so the new small machine guns, or SMGs, as opposed to LMGs, the large machine guns such as the M-16 that was used in Viet Nam, are neat, small, and imprecisely efficient when they squirt bullets with incredible rapidity around airports and other public places in these days after Lod and the Munich Olympics and the murder of Aldo Morro. They were Uzis, weapon of choice of the U.S. Secret Service. You don't aim them, you just vaguely point and swing them, and if you take out a few women and

infants along with the bad guy, well, those are the breaks. And so I was struck by the machine guns and the German shepherds on leashes whose assignment is to sniff out dope. I was very glad to see Gigi Campi waving and smiling in a crowd beyond the customs and immigration desks.

They train the dogs, he told me in the car as we swung out of the airport parking lot, by turning them on. The dogs get to dig it and so go about their sniffing altogether eagerly. Sometimes, he said, you'll see a dog and its handler wandering among the valises, glassy-eyed and both of them stoned. He made me laugh.

With what for Gigi Campi amounts to admirable restraint, he waited at least twenty minutes before asking me if I had written any of the lyrics yet. The answer was no. And within me, I still was wondering if the task could be accomplished at all. And I felt strange here, going north on this freeway, then leaving it to pass through Lombardy villages. And I thought of the long Austrian occupation of this part of Italy as we passed road signs in a language whose rules of pronunciation I did not even know. I am at ease and at home in France, but I felt strange here, and dependent on Gigi. Maybe I shouldn't have come.

Gigi's home is just outside Cazzago-Brabbia, an exquisite village whose people by common assent have kept the accoutrements of the Twentieth Century out of its streets.

Gigi is an architect by training, though he gave up the practice long ago, repelled by the rush to a sterile and humorless T-square-and-triangle aesthetic that makes hospitals and hotels, offices and apartment buildings all look alike, and Sao Paulo like Manhattan like Milan — the legacy of le Corbusier, Mies van der Roh and the Bauhaus. There are McDonald's and Wendy's and other hamburger places all over Europe now, and Gigi is dismayed by what he aptly calls "the McDonaldization of everything." Jacques Tati foresaw all its implications in his masterpiece, *Playtime*.

The last building Gigi designed was this house on a country lane, at which we now arrived. It is guarded by a high wall of river stones, beautifully set in place by hand, and by a black wooden gate which rolled quietly aside when he pushed a button in a hand control in the car, admitting us to a lakeside estate that covers ten or fifteen acres. The house is striking, wide and low, an interesting amalgam of Japanese and Italian styles, engirdled by a wide railed porch paved with gray granite. There is a swimming pool in the basement, which is next to an office on whose shelves rest the tapes of all those unobtainable albums by the Clarke-Boland Big Band, and photos of the band and the dead Ake Persson and Derek Humble. I did not yet understand how deeply those who participated in it mourned the passing of that band.

I wrote the first of the lyrics that weekend at that house. Gigi, so impatient on the one hand for me to write them, would on the other hand interrupt the painful solitary reflection that is the only way I know to get lyrics written, to regale me with his hospitality, take me out to restaurants — and the cuisine of that area is in a class with that of France — or play CBBB records at blistering volume. It was a strange weekend, and I was coming down with the 'flu. But I managed to escape from time to time, to walk down over a frozen meadow to the ice that rimmed the lake, and look across to the mountains called the pre-Alps, occasionally faintly visible through the spectral winter mists. Or I would hide in the room he had assigned to me, lie on the bed, stare at the ceiling, affecting a forbidding aloofness not because I felt it but because I needed solitude to try to solve the problem of the first song. I no longer needed the tape — I could hear Tito Fontana's music in my head — but I listened to it again and again.

The floor plan of that house is completely open. It is designed for entertaining but not for living. It is not made to be alone in. It is beautiful, all done in stone, but it lacks privacy and it contains not one decent light by which to read. And since Gigi designed it, made it what he wanted it to be, it tells us a great deal about him, about his restlessness, his incapacity for repose, and his abject terror of solitude. The only thing you can do in that house is talk, and if you had no one to talk to, it would be desolate. "It is full of ghosts," he said before the weekend was out. "Derek and Ake and my wife." She had died suddenly, in Florence, in a hotel room, while she was on business there, of a heart attack, only two years before. And a year from now, Kenny Clarke would join the ghosts in Gigi's house, and less than two weeks after Klook, Kenny Clare. "A few more deaths and jazz will be finished for me," Gigi said that weekend. But he doesn't listen to the new people, has never even heard of the brilliant young players who have come up in America. In his loyalty to his friends, which is fanatic, he tries to hold onto fa[illegible] and events in a past that is unceasably being formed from the impalpable present as one by one those we know fall away behind us, like people waving farewell from a railway station while we look back from a train that is gathering speed. I don't like it either, but it is the way of the world.

And I was there to write. From the pencilled notes I had made with Bronislau Kaper, I began to construct the first lyric from the poem called in Italian *Maddelena*. In French that is *La Madeleine*, and I thought of the great Roman-style church of that name in Paris near which I once fell in love with and courted a French girl. Later we were married and still later, sadly, divorced. The church is named for Mary of Magdala, who adored Jesus. Pope John Paul's poem seemed to me to have a melancholy sensuality. And I thought of another army of occupation, long ago in Palestine, the Roman, one of whose favorite methods of execution was crucifixion, particularly cruel because it takes the subject days to die, which explains why when the "honorable counselor" Joseph of Arimathaea "went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate," who never wanted him executed in the first place and who knew perfectly well how long it took to die on a cr[illegible] "marveled if he were already dead," and sent for the centurion, who said the man was indeed dead. Tradition sees Mary of Magdala as a courtesan who was lifted from a tawdry life by Jesus. There is a heretical legend that the wedding in Cana was her marriage to the man who had saved her. That would freeze the blood of any Protestant fundamentalist, not to mention undoubting Catholics, but would not seem unreasonable to Hugh Schoenbaum, who wrote *The Passover Plot*, or D.H. Lawrence, who wrote *The Man Who Died*, both of which hypothesize that the body was removed from the cross alive. There is another theory, elaborately explored in *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*, that Jesus never even existed but was a symbol in a drug cult. The anger of St. Stephen, which blazes

Notice

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across the centuries, refutes it. No fiction writer could have or did invent that man.

Joseph of Arimathaea took the body to a tomb and rolled a great stone to its access. "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdelene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun." John says that "Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping" after finding the body gone. It was from this that I took the cue. And gradually the poem of Karol Wojtyla took form in English, and I wrote it out on music paper, notating the slight rhythmic changes I was making in Tito's melody so that I wouldn't forget them. The lyric seems to portray an emotionally devastated woman who has just begun to glimpse the full historical significance of the man she has lost, as she stands before the empty tomb. And the line "and my lips without makeup" I took to mean: because of him, I'm no longer a whore. As I listened to Tito's music in my mind and put the words on paper, I found myself constantly on the verge of tears.

The spirit was here,
then all at once it vanished,
and I am alone in this old place.

And so I am filled with a sadness
that will endure
while I live in this body.

And in the spirit
it will find its nurture,
where there was nothing but hunger.

The sorrow of love
will continue,
through the weeks, months,
and years

and like the roots
of a dry tree in summer
are my tongue and my palate,
and my lips without makeup.

The truth
takes such a very long time
to erase all the error.

And always,
the drought of the world
is felt not by me,
but by him.

The liberties I took were delicate. In Polish, the line reads "like the roots of a dry tree." In Italian, dry tree is "albero secco," which contains five syllables as did, therefore, Tito's music. The music at that point is lovely and had to be preserved. So I added a little, writing "dry tree in summer," which contains five syllables and matches "albero secco" and thus the melodic line but does not violate the meaning.

Gigi seemed ecstatic when I showed him the lyric, and I took a breather, and again we listened to the Clarke-Boland Big Band with Gigi constantly grabbing my shoulder or my arm to be sure I didn't miss this passage or that. He moved. He stomped. He laughed to the music. He conducted the orchestra. He sang countermelodies. Obviously he knew every line of every chart that band ever recorded. He sang top parts, he sang inner parts, and he sang them in tune and in time. Amazing.

"I haven't listened to these records in a long time," he said. And I realized how much he wanted me to love what he and Boland and Klook had created. He was succeeding.

One of the most impressive players in that band was Sahib Shihab, whose work on baritone I knew and liked. I had heard him too on alto with Thelonious Monk. I remembered him from his days with the Quincy Jones big band as a decent and sensitive man. He had been living in Copenhagen for many years now, and we had corresponded quite a bit. But now I was really hearing him. What a superb baritone player! On alto, his playing — at least in the early days — had a filial resemblance to that of Charlie Parker and a fraternal relationship to that of Phil Woods. But on baritone, he had a sound somehow like an alloy of that of Gerry Mulligan and Pepper Adams or Cecil Payne, which suggested to me therefore a lineage from both Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins. Comparisons in jazz can be and too often are extended into absurdity and Shihab was, I could hear, very much his own man. The baritone, as Mulligan says, "is a hard horn to fill," and Shihab fills it full, playing with immense power and imagination. It is not enough to say that Shihab is one of the finest of baritone soloists, because (as he would say to me later in Switzerland) there have been few of them. Sahib Shihab is one of the finest of all saxophonists, not to mention flutists, a wonderful player whose controlled inner anger occasionally is released in great hilarious honks and unexpected roars. There have been few jazz musicians as under-recognized as Sahib Shihab.

The touch of the 'flu with which I had left California grew worse that weekend, and by Monday, when we drove to Milan, I felt, as others who had suffered it that year had described it, as if I were going to die. Normally I would have been fascinated by Milan, lying there in the blue winter mists, but that morning I was too sick to care about anything, and Gigi — the stranger on whose mercy I was at this moment so dependent — became seriously worried, as he told me later, and he decided to find a hospital. We searched the suburbs of the city and at last saw a sign saying *Ospidale*. I felt as helpless as a child as Gigi spoke in Italian to a nurse at a desk. Surprisingly quickly I was shown to an examining room where a handsome avuncular doctor with white hair asked me questions through Gigi, sent me for a chest X-ray, examined it, said that I did not have pneumonia but only that devastating 'flu, told me to stay in bed, and wrote a prescription. I noticed in the doctor, X-ray technicians, and nurses alike the implicit assumption that anyone who does not speak your language is defective. They would speak slowly and loudly to me, as if thereby to penetrate the wall of my stupidity, and, as sick as I was, I found it funny, and understood something fresh about the nature of prejudice.

Gigi checked me into a small hotel with an English name near his office, the Lord hotel, spoke in rapid Italian to the desk clerk and two or three other men about my condition, gave them some money and the doctor's prescription, installed me in my room, told me that he would go to his office and come back, and left. After a time an elderly man I had taken to be a clerk of some description returned with the prescription, a package of things, including — syringes! He tried to explain something to me in Italian, and finally I asked him in desperation whether he spoke French.

"Ah," he said brightly, "mais je suis Francais!" Thank God. In the middle of Milan I had found a Frenchman. He told me his name was Freddy and he was a licensed paramedic. I had forgotten: the paramedic system was developed in Europe, first in Ireland and then in Russia; and in Italy there are paramedics attached to the hotels. Freddy had for years worked on ocean liners between Le Havre and Quebec City. He said the doctor had prescribed a course of shots for me over the next three days, and I had to take all of them.

The first day passed in a fog of fever and pain. But by the next morning, I was feeling better and I went over to Gigi's office, which is on the Piazza del Duomo. It is in a peculiar old building with a creaking elevator I never learned to trust which rose in a sort of central courtyard through a series of balconies with low railings not intended for the reassurance of acrophobes. Gigi occupies two offices on the fifth floor, one at the rear of the building in which he lives, the other at the far side of the courtyard. The latter commands the most striking view in Milan. I walked to its "French" windows and looked out across the central piazza of the city at what to me is the most magnificent cathedral in the world, that fabulous foolish gingerbread statue-covered edifice with its countless spires like the fingers of upthrust hands. It had taken centuries to build and was completed on the orders of Napoleon. I am not a cathedral fan but that of Milan is the most wildly imaginative building in the world, and one of the most beautiful.

Gigi introduced me to Tito Fontana, who owns a recording studio in the Corso Venezia, a few blocks to the rear of the cathedral. He is an elegant man, tall by Italian averages, with white hair that was once blond. He placed his office, which is on the second floor of the building, at my disposal. It contained the essentials: a piano and a tape recorder. And each day I would walk there, enjoying the solitude of a strange city. The Italians disparage Milan. It is a working city, busy and efficient. But I found it very beautiful as, searching for just the right words to render those poems into English without doing them violence, I wandered to La Scala or to the castle of the Sforzas, which is now a great museum of art and furniture and the armor of ancient wars.

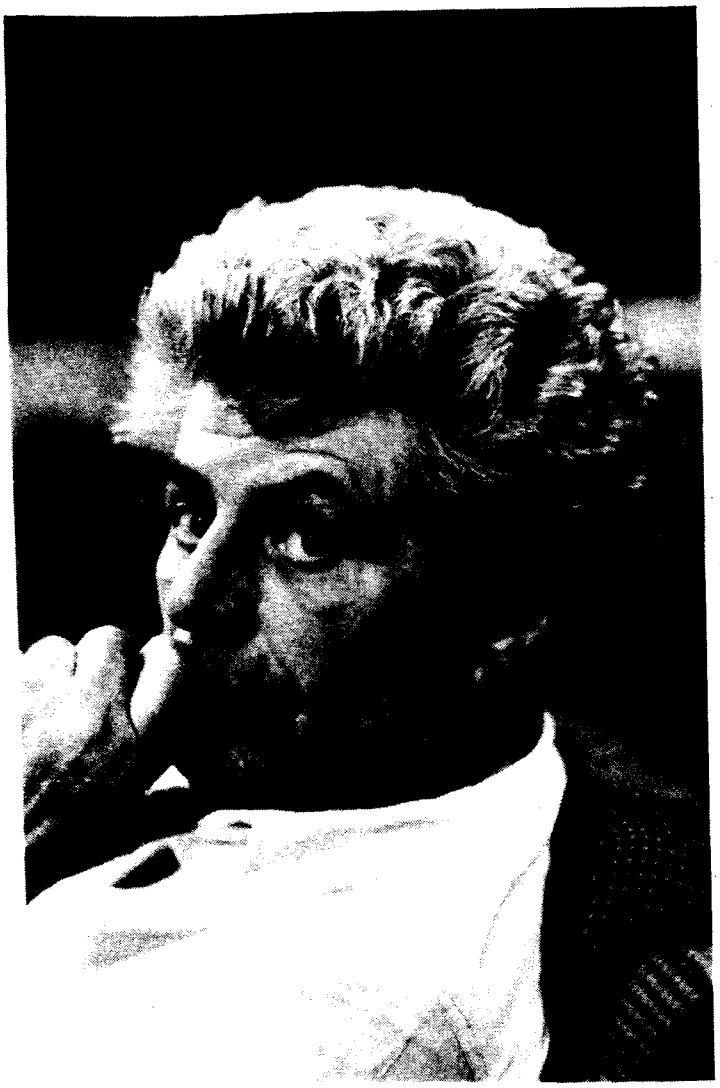
"Who were the Sforzas?" I asked Gigi one day.

"A family of Italian bandits," he replied contemptuously. Gigi is a member of the Italian Socialist Party, and at one time had written for *Avanti*, the party's daily newspaper.

I went to work on *The Armaments Worker*. It is a powerful piece, partly because of understatement, expressing the moral dilemma of everyone willy-nilly caught up in the rush to destruction, watching helplessly as those strange creatures with a compulsion to power seize the controls of the system to wallow in the dementia of their own celebrity. Our contemporary Sforzas.

I have no say
in the way of the world.
I'm not the one
who commences the wars.

I go along,
I do my job,
I do no wrong,
but I don't know.



Gigi

And that's the question
that always haunts me.
I have no say and yet
I do no wrong.

I turn little screws
with my fingers,
making parts of the weapons
that threaten us all.

And I still have no say
in the destiny lying before us.

I could create
another fate,
making the world
safe for the people
longing to live their lives.

And I would know then
the sacred reason,

the glowing meaning
of this existence.

No one then could destroy us
by their actions
or deceive us
by their words.

The world that I help make
is not a good one.
But I'm not evil,
and I didn't invent it.

But is that enough?

As the various lyrics began to take shape, Gigi's enthusiasm rose, and Tito shared it. They kept telling me how beautiful the lyrics sounded in English, which amazed me, since the conventional wisdom holds that Italian is the most beautiful language in which to sing. I began to think that Gigi's improbable project just might come to pass.

And we started remembering some of the funny things that had already attended it. By now Gigi was negotiating to get Sarah Vaughan to do it and in principle she had agreed. Almost a year before this, we had been in the New York office of Nesuhi Ertegun, chief operating officer of WEA International. Gigi had been naive enough to think that a project of this quality would be of interest to the commercial record industry. Someone, somewhere, had come up with the idea that the project should be done by Manhattan Transfer, and a meeting had been arranged with Nesuhi and Bryan Avnet, their manager, to whom I took an immediate liking.

Nesuhi Ertegun remarkably embodies what has happened to the recording industry and American music in the last four decades. He was was born in Turkey and came to America with his family shortly before World War II when his father was appointed that country's ambassador to the United States. He and his brother Ahmet became devoted jazz lovers. Ahmet founded Atlantic Records and Nesuhi lived for a time in California where he worked for Les Koenig at the Contemporary jazz label. Both brothers were deeply dedicated to the best in American music and could be accounted among the idealists of jazz. Nesuhi moved to New York and went to work for Atlantic.

Atlantic grew. Gradually it expanded, recording such commercial material as Bobby Darin's *Splish Splash* and *Mack the Knife*, and turned into one of the most commercial of all labels, with jazz slipping lower and lower on the level of its priorities.

In the conglomeration process by which the major record companies "consolidated" the industry, Warner Bros — which became Warner Communications — bought up Elektra and Atlantic Records. The latter purchase made the Ertegun brothers far wealthier than they already were. And Nesuhi became head of WEA International (for Warner-Elektra-Atlantic). Today the American record industry is dominated by six huge companies, none of which has much interest in jazz or classical music or for that matter anything but profits, and jazz struggles to survive on small budgets and small labels. Nesuhi Ertegun is a power in a great commercial empire, and I simply could not see his taking an interest in this project.

He is a small man, with dark skin and straight gray hair, always beautifully groomed and dressed. In his tasteful gray office in Rockefeller Center, hung with selections from his famous collection of modern art, he started the meeting with a preamble about how long we had all been friends, proceeding to complimentary comments about Gigi and me and the Transfer, then saying the project should use ten great arrangers (whereas I already foresaw that the big problem would be achieving stylistic unity) and that Quincy Jones should be the album producer, and Quincy would charge a minimum of half a million dollars. Swell.

At that point — early in 1983 — there was a plan afoot to present the work in concert in the square in front of the basilica of St. Peter's in Rome, in a coproduction with Italian television. The date was fixed. It was to be Wednesday, June 15, the day before the Pope was to leave on his now-historic trip to Poland. And Wednesday is the day he holds public audience. The square would be filled with people.

Since I was the one on whom the first responsibility would devolve, namely getting the lyrics ready in English, after which I foresaw I would have to work with Manhattan Transfer as they learned the material, and since Gigi's scheme was to have them record it in at least three languages, I began to worry about logistics.

At this point Bryan Avnet came out with one of the funniest show-business lines I have ever heard. He had specified how much money Manhattan Transfer wanted, what accomodations they would require, and how much expense money they would need. The project's purpose, a plea for world peace, seemed to have gotten lost. And then he said to Gigi, "Let me be sure we're clear about this. The Pope will definitely be there that day, will he?"

I wish I had a photo of Gigi's nonplussed expression at that moment. He said, in his uncertain English, "Nobody can be sure of that, not even the Pope himself. The cardinals are involved."

"Then we may be here under a misapprehension," Bryan Avnet said. "It was our understanding that the Pope would definitely be working with us."

Gigi gave me a blank stare.

We had dinner that night with Billy Mitchell, the saxophonist, who had been a member of the Clarke-Boland Big Band. I think the three of us created a modest disturbance among the sedate clientelle of the Plaza hotel's restaurant as we laughed at that. It became a leitmotif to which we constantly alluded as the project unfolded: *I thought the Pope would be working with us.*

The next song I worked on was *The Actor.*

A strange irony of our time had passed unnoticed by the press. In Rome there was a former actor pleading for peace who had experienced first-hand the horrors of the most terrible war in history. In Washington there was a former actor pleading for war and ordering or threatening or preparing invasions, who had never seen a shot fired in anger; during that same war he had made movies about patriotism and bravery while other men died. Both of them had been felled by bullets in assassination attempts.

Acting is a strange profession, involving a talent for deception. Elizabeth Ashley has said that the probable value of affecting to be a rock or a tree in Actor's Studio classes was that you would never be called upon on the stage to do anything comparably embarrassing. She is doubtless right. You must achieve an utter lack of shame about doing and saying even preposterous things.

I have heard it said by actors that the greatest actor in the

English language is Michael Parks. Temperamentally incapable of playing the Hollywood game, he goes chronically under-recognized — a sort of Sahib Shihab of actors. He observes people constantly, their mannerisms and speech habits. He told me once about "this guy I met in a bar last week, an ex-Marine who had been in Viet Nam. He was the kind who of guy who . . . No, wait, I'll do him for you." And he turned away from me for a moment, like a vaudeville comic putting on a hat and spectacles. When he turned back, his face had taken on that purplish hue of the advanced alcoholic. Even the texture of his skin seemed to have changed. "Did you ever spin a gook with an M-16?" he snarled. It was awesome — brilliant and terrifying. Michael had *become* that man. And then the man disappeared and Michael became Michael again. He dismissed my astonishment saying, "It's only a matter of credibility."

So many people inside me,
living their lives,
seeing all that I see,
speaking only through me.

I'm like the channel of a river
and there's always running through me
all the passions and illusions of men.

But I also have my own life
that I feel that those others within me
may in some way be changing.

Sometimes I feel
I will melt into all men
with their yearnings
and their follies always like my own.

So many voices I hear,
so demanding —
they're all around me.

By studying the poems of Karol Wojtyla in Italian, I had acquired their vocabulary. Absorbing the sounds of the language through endless repetition of the songs in the album and the enunciation of the singer Paula Orlandi — whose Italian is exquisite — I was passively acquiring an understanding of its rules of pronunciation and beginning to hear it in the streets. I bought a grammar and at nights, at the hotel, began to study the language formally. I thought of Jobim. Soldier Latin, he calls the Romance languages. Enshrouded in the solitude of my assignment, I was falling in love with Italy in general and Milan in particular.

Milan has a particular and grim image in the common memory, as Dallas has one as the place where John F. Kennedy was killed. Milan is the city where Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Pettaci, were executed and hung by their ankles in a filling station. The photos of the two of them, arms dangling, Mussolini in jodhpurs and boots, Pettaci with her skirts dangling up from her waist to reveal her underwear, are indelible in the memory of anyone who lived through that period. The next weekend, when Gigi and I went back out to the house at Cazzago, I asked him what had happened.

"Everyone forgets," Gigi said, "that fascism didn't begin in Germany, it began in Italy. We showed them how."

When Mussolini and his mistress, attempting to escape to Germany, were captured by anti-fascist Italian partisans, mostly socialists and communists, a debate began over how to dispose of him. It lasted well into the next day. And the socialist Sandro Pertini (the present president of Italy, a man revered and by now considered a likely candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize) walked in on the meeting. He said that the British and Americans would undoubtedly establish war crimes tribunals, and Mussolini would be brought to trial. He said the trial might last up to two years, during which thirty years of Italian shame would be displayed before the world, and in the end the Allies would probably execute him, along with the German war criminals. He told the partisans they must make up their minds what they were going to do and then do it quickly.

So they took Mussolini out and shot him, along with Pettaci. But was it necessary, I asked Gigi, to hang them up in public, like deer awaiting dressing?

"That was in retaliation for things that had been done to the partisans," Gigi said. "Pertini was very upset about it."

There is a famous story about Chet Baker and Romano Mussolini, the dictator's son, who was — and is — a jazz pianist. Supposedly they were to record together in Rome. Supposedly they were introduced at the date. Supposedly Chet Baker said to Romano Mussolini, "Hey, baby, sorry to hear about your old man."

I asked Gigi if he had heard the story. He had. Did he know whether it was true? No, but he believed that it well might be — and so do many other people.

By now Gigi, in a great and frantic flurry of activity, was organizing the concert and recording sessions. I couldn't believe it. The material wasn't even written and he was already casting and planning the session. There were all sorts of plans. Plans came and they went. One was to record it in concert in Rome, another to do it in Milan. He wanted a big orchestra, and there would be at least five trumpets, all great players — Benny Bailey, Rick Kiefer, Idrees Sulieman, Art Farmer and Rolf Ericson, as it turned out.

I argued with him. "Why five trumpets?" I said. "This is essentially a vocal recording, and we certainly don't need a split lead or all that power.

"Shh," he said, putting a finger to his lips. "It's almost the Clarke-Boland Big Band. Let me have my dream."

The idea of Manhattan Transfer long since having been abandoned, the growing probability was that Sarah Vaughan would be the singer. But Gigi wanted two singers. He wanted Benard Ighner, and had already spoken to Benard. Gigi's late wife had loved Benard's song *Everything Must Change*. A line from the song is on the wall of her crypt. I wasn't convinced we should use two singers — again, it would set up stylistic disparity and discontinuity.

If we were to do a project that would be a plea for international brotherhood and understanding, then our performers should represent two races. And one of the songs would create a casting problem, if the singer were not white. One of Karol Wojtyla's poems, called *The Black*, represented a vision of Africa in the mind of a European. I was already translating this piece, which ultimately became:

In you, O my brother beloved,
is a continent vast and unending,
where you see great rivers
run dry in their beds
and the sun consumes
all that it touches,
just like a crucible

melting down iron.

In you, I sense
my own thoughts,
like echoes.
They may be different
but in essence
they use the same scale
in weighing and dividing
verity from falsity.

And suddenly, the ecstasy
of measuring those thoughts
in the same scale of values
comes shining through,
a light that burns
in your eyes and my eyes;
but in spite of the differences,
the essence
has always been the same.

If the song should be sung by a black American, its effect as a statement of brotherhood between the European and African cultures would be compromised, if not completely destroyed. Indeed it could then be construed to suggest a tacit understanding between black America and black Africa of hostility to the white world.

And so I said that if we used a second singer, that singer should be white.

"We," Gigi said, head a little back, his lower lip out, "We," in that way it seems not only the French and British address us barbarians from the New World but sometimes the Italians too (although I must always remember that Gigi is also German), "We don't have those problems here." Meaning: unlike you racist Americans. I couldn't even be bothered replying.

This was another of many disagreements Gigi and I were to have, some of them bitter and loud. I simply went on writing. And I would wander through the castle of the Sforzas, studying paintings of Christian martyrdom, men getting their heads cut off, men shot full of arrows, men on crosses, and I thought of all the battles fought and people slaughtered in the name of Jesus, and looked at the armor, magnificently crafted, and pikes and swords and shields.

By my second week in Milan, the worst of the 'flu had left me, and I picked up the phone and dialed a number. A woman's voice answered in Italian, and I said, "Franca, is Gerry there?" and told her who was calling. I heard her announce it in the room, and an astonished voice say to her, "Where is he *calling* from?" He took the phone.

"Lees," he said.

"Mulligan," I said.

"Where are you?"

"Here. In Milan." Gerry and his Italian wife Franca live part of each year there now. And so they invited me to lunch. I dined with them in their beautiful apartment and Gerry played me some new pieces at the piano, pieces with a strong Italian flavor to them.

The next night I had dinner with Tito Fontana and his wife, Lea Piccoli, wonderful gracious people. They couldn't believe what I told them of the extent of religious intrusion on the political process of the United States. A European politician who invoked the name of God for votes would be finished. Nor could they believe it when I told them American money is inscribed *In God We Trust*, until I showed them a one-dollar bill.

Rushing onward with his plans for the recording, Gigi decided we should go to Switzerland to see Francy Boland. We flew to Geneva, and discussed with Francy the size and composition of the orchestra. Our flight back the next morning was cancelled because of a snow storm. We took the train to Milan, emerging in the great pompous fantasy of a railway station erected on the orders of Mussolini as a statement of Italian grandeur. Gigi despises that building, although I thought it had a strange sort of pretentious appeal. Because Gigi had pointed out so many buildings erected during that period, I was beginning to be able to detect for myself the curious grandiose architecture of the fascist period. With his acute sensitivity to history, Gigi was giving me invaluable gifts of insight. When I wasn't fighting with him, I found him the most estimable and delightful of companions.

My time was running out. I had to return to America because I had signed a contract to do a singing engagement at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa with Roger Kellaway. Roger wanted to rehearse for a few days in New York. I had booked my ticket for a forty-eight hour stopover in Paris to see my son. I told Gigi I would finish the songs in America.

Gigi asked me to make a demo of those already written before leaving. My throat felt like sandpaper after the 'flu but we went to Tito Fontana's studio anyway. All I could do was my best. I used the tracks from the album Paola Orlandi had recorded — which were of course in her keys, about a fourth too high for me. Somehow I got through the songs. I thought the tapes were terrible, but Gigi and Tito were enthusiastic about them.

After the last take, I began to gather up my lead sheets in the studio. Through the double window to the control room I could see Gigi and Tito gesticulating wildly and apparently angrily. When I opened the door to the room the noise of their dispute exploded. Tito was pounding a table with the flat of his hand, saying, "No, no, no!", which is pretty much the same in all western languages. Until now Tito had struck me as being a contained sort of man, but I was confronted now with his intensity. Since I could not understand the argument, I withdrew from the room as graciously as I could.

Not until Gigi and I were at dinner did I ask what it was about. "Well," Gigi said, "I told Tito that I thought we needed two new songs, not by the Pope. They should have new lyrics by you. He got very angry and started screaming and said it would violate the form, and we should only use poems by the Pope."

"But I agree with Tito," I said. "The problem in this project is unity. There's no continuity in it. We don't need ten arrangers, as Nesuhi said we did, and we do not need two different voices in the lyrics. And there should be no lyrics by me."

We argued. Finally I let the matter drop, deciding that I simply would not write the two songs and that would settle that. Again I underestimated Gigi's intransigence. Somehow or other he would get me to write those new songs, and I would realize in the end that on this point, he was right.

The next day Gigi took me to the airport. I boarded the plane from the rear, walked toward its middle, saw a beautiful woman coming toward me — and walked into Lea Piccoli, Tito's wife! I knew perhaps seven people in all of Italy, including Gerry and Franca Mulligan, Gigi and his secretary, Tito and Lea, and Freddy the paramedic. What were the odds that one of them would be on the same outbound flight with me — and in a seat behind me at that? Another passenger agreeably exchanged

seats with me and I flew to Paris with Lea, on her way there to cover a fashion show for Italian television. The flight was rough. She said, laughing, "I hope your fellow lyricist is watching out for us."

My son Philip, now twenty-seven and six-foot-two, met me at Charles DeGaulle Airport. His full name is Alain Philippe. He was named for two of my closest friends, one a Dutch Jew whose mother died in the bombing of Rotterdam, the other a French Polish Jew whose mother died at Auschwitz. "Bon jour, mon fils," I said.

"Bon jour, mon pere. Ca vas bien?" He kissed me on the cheek, as the French are wont to do.

"Pas mal. How's your mother?"

"Fine. My grandparents want to see you."

"Oh no. That would be very uncomfortable."

"They said to tell you they have no bad feelings about you. They still love you."

"Well, I dunno . . . ."

He was very insistent. "It'll be cool," he said, and finally I said, still doubtfully, "Okay." As we got into the bus that would take us to the Metro, I asked him the eternal music business question: "Are you working?"

"I'm playing some cocktail piano, some jazz dates, some other things. Practicing my brains out."

I stayed with him in his apartment that night. In the morning I went for a walk in the rain. It had been so long since I had seen Paris, and I walked down the Champs Elysee in tears for sheer love of the place.

I took the Metro to Porte Doree, as I had countless times before. The neighborhood was completely unchanged, the same little bakery called Flamarion, the same cafes, the same magazine store, the same charcutiers. I was unprepared for the intensity of feeling I would have walking up that busy boulevard, the unanticipated inundation of vivid memories, such as watching Phil take his first steps across the street there in the Bois de Vincennes.

I knocked on the door of the apartment of my former inlaws, and was admitted, and took my ex-mother-in-law in my arms. She cried and I cried. She seemed so small and walked now with a cane after a hip operation. But her cooking was as always; I went shopping with my son for my favorite goodies, and then we had a glorious lunch. I looked at my nephew Franck, whom I adored when he was a little boy, and at my ex-father-in-law, who had white hair now. His people were well-to-do before the war, impoverished at the end of it. When I first knew this family, in 1954, some foods were still scarce in France and I brought them coffee from that Canadian air base at Gros Tonquin whose commanding officer was from Brooklyn.

This man, my ex-father-in-law, one Andre Ducreux, patriotic soldier, was in the French tank corps at the start of the war. Due to corruption in the French military, his tank simply ran out of gas. He was captured, treated well, and released. But the experience left him embittered. I knew the story of the Occupation of Paris almost as a personal memory, almost as if I had lived through it myself, from my years as a member of this family.

I remembered too taking Phil and Franck on an outing to the Chateau de Vincennes. I thought it would be fun for two little boys to explore a fine old castle. We came all unexpectedly on a plaque in its lower level commemorating the hundreds and hundreds of French people who had been stood up against this wall and executed by the Germans. I tried to keep the two boys from seeing it, but it was too late. Franck could already read, and Phil was learning, and so I had to discuss with them how many people had died on this spot and what war is. All that now seemed so long ago.

The telephone rang. Phil answered it. Then he said to me, "It's my mother. Would you like to speak to her?"

The conversation was not as awkward as I might have imagined. "You've almost lost your accent in English," I told her. When I met her she spoke hardly any English and I hardly any French.

During the last winter of the war, the walls of this apartment were sheeted with ice. She suffered through meningitis without medication. On the day of the Liberation, she went to the Place de la Bastille with a young boyfriend. They stood in the cheering crowds. There were still snipers on the rooftops. He fell dead at her feet. She was seventeen.

I had not realized how much I regretted estrangement from this family. Because my son exists I have ties of blood to France. He healed something that day, by making me come here for lunch.

It came time to leave. My father-in-law shook my hand, then got tears in his eyes. "Go on, scram," he said in French. Vas y.

Phil took me to the airport the next day. Roger and I rehearsed for two or three days in New York, then flew to Ottawa a day before our engagement because it was closing night for Zoot Sims. I'm glad we did. He played beautifully, thrillingly. He always did. But he was having some pain and he played sitting down.

After the set he said, "So you guys are opening here tomorrow?" Then he said to me, with a kind of astonishment, "All the years I've known you, and I didn't know you could sing."

"Well, Jack," I said, "all the years I've known you, and I didn't know you could sing either." And we laughed. I had no idea that this was the last evening I would ever laugh with Zoot Sims, and that little more than a year later Roger would play at his memorial service.

As we settled down to hear Zoot's last set, I glanced at a card on the table that listed coming attractions. The pianist to follow Roger and me was Romano Mussolini.

(To be continued)

Jazzletter Records

With this issue, we are forming Jazzletter Records. And the first release is an incredible one — the album we made in Dusseldorf and Cologne with Sarah Vaughan and that remarkable orchestra. It is called *The Planet Is Alive: Let It Live*, and it is a plea for world peace. I do believe it is Sass's finest performance. Sal Nistico cried all through the concert. The album, on virgin vinyl, is available from *Jazzletter* for $12.75. Some of that covers pressing and production costs, some of it covers royalties, some of it goes to recoup money Gigi poured into the production. And a dollar of it goes to Catholic charities as a contribution to the superb job they are doing in helping the American homeless.

For a long time I have had an inchoate idea of combining music not with film but with print. This album makes it possible. When music is the subject of discussion, print is a frustrating medium. I want you to *hear* what happened in Dusseldorf. When we get to Part IV of this story, I want you to be *at* the concert with Francy and Shihab and Sass and Gigi and Lalo and the rest of us.