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In Search of Gerry Mulligan
Part II

After 1969, Gerry and I never lived in the same city. I moved to Toronto for a few years, then to California. Once he came up to Toronto for a few days, and we did a television show together. We always stayed in touch. On my way to Paris, with a stopover at Kennedy airport, I called him from a phone booth. The conversation lasted an hour; it was mostly about Irish history.

Eventually Gerry married a tall and aristocratic Italian photojournalist named Franca Rota, whom he met on a recording date in Milan. They live in a house in Connecticut and an apartment in Milan, not far from the great cathedral and from the castle of the Sforzas, now a museum. I had lunch with them in Milan in 1984. By now Gerry did not smoke or drink. He never was a heavy eater, but his diet had become disciplined to the point of the Spartan. He told me I shouldn't use salt.

I'd see him, too, whenever he played the Los Angeles area.

In the spring of 1994, we found ourselves on a jazz cruise of the Caribbean, with time for conversation, a little as in the Jim and Andy's days of memory. I asked him about things we had never discussed, in particular his family. I was aware that his relations with his father had been somewhat uncomfortable. It will usually be found that a gifted musician was encouraged by a parent or both parents, but not in Gerry's case.

Gerry is the youngest of four boys, in order: George, Phil, Ron, Gerry. All three of his brothers are, like their father, engineers, and Gerry's father wanted him to be one.

"Don't you think that's affected your work?" I said, thinking of the sense of design in all Gerry's writing and playing.

"Some of the attitude of the builder, the constructor, I suppose," he said.

"What did he do exactly? I asked.

Gerry said,"By the time my father was mature, they had started to use engineering to improve efficiency and practices in factories. It was the beginning of the time study period. The pejorative term for what my father did was efficiency expert. Of course, the companies hated to see people like that coming because they knew they were going to have to work hard. And it meant that a lot of people were going to lose their jobs because they streamlined it. So he was schooled in all sorts of engineering.

"I remember when I was in high school in Detroit, he put himself through night school in aeronautical engineering, just to increase his own abilities. But he had his peculiarities. He had this image of having an engineering business with his sons. Dynasty time. My brothers fought that battle pretty well. My oldest brother didn't want to go to engineering school, and my father was only going to send him to school if he studied engineering. And I think he finally knuckled under and went and was very unhappy in engineering. The brother after him liked it, so it was all right.

"My father had a kind of strange attitude. I have realized in recent years, he was kind of anti-education and anti-intellectual. It was too bad, because he missed a lot of things. At the point where I started to be in contact with other musicians, especially the people with education, which I didn't have, have never had, I heard Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*. My father's response was, 'Ravel only ever wrote one piece, and that was the *Bolero*.' Well you realize you can't have much conversation with people who think like that."

"There's a similarity here," I said. "My father, who was widely read, nonetheless had the same anti-intellectual attitude. He once said, 'An intellectual is like a man in a white suit who can't change a tire.'"

Gerry mused on that for a moment, then laughed — he laughs a lot, and there is a kind of effervescence in his voice. He said, "If I'd been smarter when I was young, and my father had come right out and said that to me, I'd have said, 'Yeah, well I want to be the man in the white suit. Let somebody else change the tire!'" And he laughed again.

I remembered the Gerry Mulligan windup doll Bob Brookmeyer invented. You wind it up, put it on the table, and it sends for room service. Gerry later amended that, satirizing himself: "Hello, room service? Send up the concert."

"What was your father's name?" I asked. "And where did the family come from?"

"His name was George. His family was from Wilmington, Delaware. His family must have come over here from Ireland in, probably, the 1850s or thereabouts. My mother was half Irish. Her mother was born in Germany, and her father's family was Protestant Irish. So I came along with a built-in dichotomy.

"I was born in New York, but before I was one, my father picked up the family and moved to Marion, Ohio, where he became an executive with a company called the Marion Steam Shovel Company. The biggest business in town, a big, big, big factory. To this day, you'll see older equipment with that name on it. And then he was with another company that made Hercules road rollers and stuff like that. So we were out there until I was ten years old and in about fourth grade." Laughing, he added: "So I always say I did one to ten in Ohio.

"After that he went with a big company, May Consulting Engineers, still one of the biggest, based in Chicago. He did a lot of jobs for them. And because all these jobs would take a year or two, we wound up going with them. From Ohio he went to a job in Puerto Rico for a winter.

"Meanwhile, my grandfather, who was a retired locomotive engineer from the Pennsylvania Railroad, had died. He and my grandmother lived in South Jersey. So we went there for a while.

"My father then went to Chicago. We were there for one school year. I started to go down the garden path, because what was available there was four theaters that had big bands playing. I was old enough to get on the El and go downtown. We lived at 4200

north, near Sheridan Road. Not far from the lake. I went to the grade school whose claim to fame is that Joyce Kilmer and Janet Gaynor went there. I spent my time learning how to run fast. I was the country bumpkin. I guess it was the beginning of various kinds of ethnic warfare. The kids were ganging up on other kids, and I guess I looked like a likely subject, because they'd chase me and beat the hell out of me if they could.

"Then my father went to a job in Kalamazoo, Michigan. We were there for about three years. That's where I first got some training on an instrument, barring the one semester in second grade in grade school that had piano lessons. At the recital, I would get half way through a piece and forget it. About the second time I started over they came and took me offstage, like amateur night at the Apollo. And the nun told my mother, 'Just save your money. He will never play these things the way they were written.' A nun had said it to my mother, therefore it must be the truth.

"In Kalamazoo, I wanted to take trumpet but I got side-tracked onto clarinet. I liked clarinet, because I liked Artie Shaw a lot, and I liked the Thornhill band, with Irving Fazola. I loved the sound of Irving Fazola, and one thing led to another.

"I wrote my first arrangement in Kalamazoo.

"I went to a public school the first year in Kalamazoo. There was a kid who lived across the street who could play trumpet. He could play things like *Carnival of Venice* and *Flight of the Bumble Bee*. I was the most envious kid you ever saw. I admired him and we were best friends.

"The next year they sent me downtown to the Catholic school. The school was right next to the Michigan Central tracks. Every day I'd go out for the recess just as the Wolverine was going by. I used to see the people sitting in the dining car, with the white table cloths and the silverware. The Wolverine was a very classy train on the New York Central. For a long time the Wolverine had the fastest schedule of any train in the country. Those were the Michigan Central tracks, but the Michigan Central was part of the New York Central. A great train, going by. And here I am in this filthy play yard in the freezing cold. I was envious then, too."

"Does that explain your fascination with trains?" I asked.

"Well it runs in the family. My father's family had been with the B&O and the C&O and on my mother's side, her father was a locomotive engineer with the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Irish built a lot of the railroads in this country. So I came by it naturally.

"The next year, they put up a new building and the school moved over there. They decided they were going to have their first school orchestra. They got a teacher and everything, and I learned the basics of the clarinet, and now we had an instrumentation not to be believed: probably a trumpet, a clarinet, two violins, and God knows what. An ungodly conglomeration. So I sat down and wrote an arrangement of *Lover*, because I was fascinated by the chromatic progressions. I brought it in to play, and like a damn fool I put the title *Lover* on the top of it. The nun took one look at it and said, 'We can't play that.' So I never heard my first chart.

"But what's more interesting is what prompted me to write an arrangement in the first place. I don't know the answer. I just wanted to do it. I figured I could do it. I'd figured out how to make a transposition chart. I had one of those charts that you put behind the piano keys when you're a kid starting out. I guess I was in about the seventh grade at the time. A lot of us who were arrangers, there was always a kind of fraternity among arrangers, because of the recognition of the similarities. There are things that you know how to do and don't know how you know. I knew the basics of orchestration without having to be told."

"Could you, in grade seven, actually listen to a record and hear the chord content?"

"A lot of it, sure. The thing that I liked about the bands was the textures. I always was hooked on that. What you do with a single instrument is nice. What you do with a whole bunch of instruments becomes an interesting challenge to make it all add up to something cohesive. And to turn this thing that deals with a lot of mechanics into music is a miracle.

"If somebody had said, 'You can't do it,' it might have stopped me.' But nobody did."

"Let me get this straight," I said. "As a kid in grade seven, you could simply hear the contents of arrangements on records, hear the voices, without lessons?"

"Yeah."

"To me, that's weird. Henry Mancini was the same. He could just hear it. He told me, and Horace Silver did the same thing, that he'd play records at slow speeds until he could figure out what was in the chords."

"I wasn't that smart," Gerry said. "I did it the hard way."

"Your parents were not musical?"

"My mother and father were both born in the nineties. So they were in their twenties and thirties in the twenties and thirties of this century. And they both learned enough piano to be able to play."

He was referring to that era before commonplace reproduced music, when the ability to play the piano was considered a normal social grace. People made their own musical entertainment.

Gerry continued, "My father could read, but he read like an engineer. He could sit down and play a piece of music, but he'd miss all the accidentals, play lots of wrong notes, and just go happily along. But my mother played very nicely. She liked pretty music."

"Obviously you left Kalamazoo eventually," I said.

"We went from Kalamazoo to Detroit. There wasn't music proliferating in the schools. There was no such thing as jazz courses. And no such thing, really, as available lessons on an instrument. Music was a very separate and separated thing.

"But there was music around. Detroit is where I got totally hooked on boogie-woogie piano players. I loved Meade Lux Lewis and Pete Johnson and Pinetop, that whole era. It was such a joyful,

funny, dynamic music. In Detroit we had at least one thing. The Michigan Theater played bands. That's one of the days I can pinpoint accurately: I know where I was December 7, 1941. It was Sunday and I was at the Michigan Theater to hear Erskine Hawkins. I loved that band.

"I didn't realize it then, but Erskine liked a very thin sound. And apparently he liked guys in the section to have that sound. As a consequence, when they played even reasonably high, it sounded exciting. It sounded piercing. A high C with a thin sound really sounds high. Then later on, I wrote things for bands with guys with incredible chops; they could play a high C that was so fat that it didn't sound high. They had to go up to an altissimo G or something before it really started to sound piercing. It finally dawned on me that a fat sound on trumpet somehow diminished the impact of the highness of the note. Took all the excitement away. Erskine's band had a crackling excitement, and mainly because the trumpet players had a thin sound. It was great.

"From Detroit we went to Reading, Pennsylvania. My father was working for a company that made an alloy of beryllium and copper. It was valuable because it's non-sparking and they can make tools for working around refineries or any place where sparks are dangerous. It's also unaffected by altitude or temperature. When I finally got a saxophone and clarinet, I wanted him to make me a set of springs, because that alloy never wears out, but he never did.

"I worked at that plant one summer as the mail boy. I saved my money and bought my first clarinet. I went to a teacher at the music store where I bought it and went through the exercises with the books. Sammy Correnti. A wonderful man. Sammy also transcribed a lot of the players he had known in the twenties and thirties.

"One day after I'd been taking lessons with Sammy for a while, he brought in an arrangement he had written in the early thirties on a piece called *Dark Eyes*, written for three brass, three saxes, and three rhythm — two altos and a tenor, two trumpets and a bone. He said, 'Here, take this and revoice it for four brass and four saxes.' I did. His attitude was, 'You can do this, so do it.' It wasn't 'You can't do it.'

"We had these things to learn, jazz choruses. I learned Artie Shaw's *Concerto for Clarinet* solo and his solo on *Stardust*."

"Just about every reed player I ever met learned that *Stardust* solo," I said. "Billy Mitchell told me he could still play it. Did you start working while you were in Reading?"

"Yeah. I started working professionally in Reading. I put together a quartet in high school. My brothers had a good time driving us around to our gigs, because all of us in my group were too young to drive. I was back there a few years ago. I went out to the church where we used to play for dances.

"But I wanted to have a big band. So I started collecting stock arrangements. Then they used to do manuscript charts of various bands. I had things from Les Brown's band, from this band and that band. We used to get gigs. I'd get these guys together and rehearse. Then it would be a mad thing. The band would be playing from eight to eleven in a gymnasium some place, and my brothers would be racing back and forth. This guy could make it from eight to nine, then they'd have to pick up his replacement.

"In Reading there was a piano player named Dave Stevens, who played with one of the studio bands in Philadelphia. I was a sophomore in high school, but I was playing with the professionals in town.

"Pennsylvania was a blue-law state, which meant that no entertainment was allowed on Sundays, no movies, no stage shows, no nothing. But it was all legal in private clubs, so private clubs proliferated all over Pennsylvania, which meant that there was work for musicians in Pennsylvania when work was dying out everywhere. I remember we played the Fifth Ward Democratic, the Third Ward Republican, the Polish American, the Irish American. Name it, all the ethnic groups in town, the labor unions, and they all had their own clubs and each one of them would hire a band, and a couple of them even had big bands. The Eagles had a thirteen or fourteen-piece band. That was the most desirable one in town. I used to play in the band at the Orioles. These were good musicians I played with. I was very lucky."

I said, "Well this bears on what Bill Challis told me. He said that in the twenties, around Wilkes Barre, the musicians played dances in clubs. The coal barons had their clubs, the miners had their clubs, and the miners loved to dance. And when you think of all the musicians who came out of Pennsylvania, all the guys who came out of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, the Dorsey brothers, Benny Golson, Henry Mancini, Billy Strayhorn, Red Rodney, it's a remarkable list."

"That may well have been a factor," Gerry said. "The blue laws and the clubs. Not only that, after the war, when work started to fall off for musicians, there still was that outlet in Pennsylvania for professional musicians."

I said, "Artie Shaw told me that in the heyday of the bands, you could play a solid month of one-nighters in Pennsylvania."

"Hmm. Well, those are all things that are impossible for people nowadays to understand. How many bands there were. There really was a lot of music available."

"What came after Reading?"

"From Reading, we moved to Philadelphia, and I found myself in West Philadelphia Catholic High School for Boys. About two thousand boys, and no girls. That was the first time I had encountered that, and I hated it. Especially because down the street two blocks was the girls' school, and they started rehearsing their symphony orchestra in October for a concert in April. Envy again. There was no music in the school I was in.

"Dave Stevens of Reading had told me to go down to see Johnny Warrington, who had the house band at radio station WCAU. I took myself down to WCAU and saw Johnny. Now I think what kind of bemusement it must have fostered in him, to

have this junior high-school kid come in and say, 'I want to write for your band.'

"And sure enough, he assigned a piece to me and said, 'Make me an arrangement of this. It will be for our Saturday night show.' I took the piece and spent a couple of weeks writing the arrangement. I brought it back. He went over it with me and he said, 'Well, let's see, you could have done this, you could have done that. Why didn't you do that here? Take it back and rewrite it and bring it back.' So I lucked into a teacher, somebody who helped. And he bought it and played it and assigned me something else.

"But the way that I got it written was even wilder. I really hated the school. There were a couple of teachers I liked and a couple of subjects that were fascinating. I had looked forward to chemistry as being probably an interesting subject, because you had laboratory work and it would be fun doing experiments. I had a teacher who ruined it for me. He spoke in a monotone, and he was a very dull man, and I remembered nothing.

"The school was taught by Christian brothers. Brother Martin was in charge of the band. When I transferred into this school and talked to Brother Martin, he never even asked me or even suggested that I play with the marching band. He explained that the marching band was not very good. The guys only went out for the band to get a letter and go to the ball games free. He said, 'The facilities are here. Any time you want to use the band room, it's yours.'

"Because it was such a big school, we had staggered lunch breaks. There were four lunch breaks. I had one of my own and three others. I started a band out of what I could get out of this marching band. I would have one of them come to my class and say, 'Brother Martin wants Gerry Mulligan in the band room.' So I would spend three out of the four lunch breaks in the band room, writing my chart for WCAU."

I said, "I'd forgotten that aside from the radio networks, which not only used to broadcast the big bands but had symphony orchestras on staff, even local radio stations employed bands, and pianists, and small groups. They generated their own music. They didn't just play records, as they do now. Radio was a tremendous generative force for music."

"Oh yeah. And given the opportunity, bands in all kinds of work tried to do their best. That's not to say all bands were good, because there were a lot of sloppy bands around. But the best of them, which was a lot of them, were always trying for something. They were trying to make music better. We always felt we could learn something, try something. So it was a good time for bands, all through the thirties and forties.

"This brings up one of the areas where musicians got into a wrongful kind of relationship to the rest of the society, because of the attitude of the musicians' union. The union started in Chicago, and it was very much like a gangster organization, the way it went about doing things. For instance, their attitude in a town like Philadelphia. They would go into a radio station like WCAU and say, 'How many musicians do you employ?' The station might say something like, 'We employ ten.' And the union would say, 'All right, from now on you employ thirteen. How much are you paying them?' And the station might say, 'We're paying seventy-five dollars a week.' And the union might say, 'From now on you're paying a hundred.' It was done without discussion, it was: This is the way it's going to be or we'll pull the music out altogether.

"You'd be surprised how many radio stations said, 'Well, screw it.' And they got rid of the musicians. Those kinds of practices, I think, did musicians a great disservice. It made an antagonistic relationship that was harmful and wrong. And of course Petrillo, who was very much a dictatorial type, arbitrarily, against the advice of many people in the union, including the bandleaders, pulled the recording ban. That was the *coup de grace* for the big bands. Of all the times when he pulled it, when the guys were coming back from the service and needed all the help they could get!"

"But you still had WCAU and Johnny Warrington," I said. "Were you still in high school?"

"Yeah. In fact, at the school, I decided to put a band together. There were a lot of clarinet players in the marching band. There was only one kid who had a saxophone. I went and bought an alto so I would have at least two saxophones. We had a bunch of trumpets and we had one kid who played decent trombone. I wrote arrangements for the band, using this instrumentation. It came out sounding like Glenn Miller, because it was heavy on the clarinets. But because of that, I made something happen in the school, and we became the heroes that year, playing at various schools, playing at their assemblies. We even went down and played at the girls' school. So I suppose the girls' school was envious that we had a dance band and they only had a symphony orchestra.

"I went into the senior year. Chemistry had been destroyed for me, and I was bored to tears by the rest of the school. In senior year they had physics. They had lecture classes. It was like college. You're a big kid now. I go into the lecture room for the first thing on physics, and who have I got? The same guy who ruined chemistry for me. My mind did a trick on me that day, and I realized it started this at other times and it frightened me. Have you ever forgotten how to do something automatic, like tying your shoes or tying your tie? I watched this man. His lips were moving but I forgot what words meant. I totally lost the connection with language. I got up at the end of the class and went down to the office of the school and said, 'I'm leaving school. I have my father's permission. I'm going on the road with a band.'

"I didn't have a job and I didn't have my father's permission. I went to see Brother Martin, who didn't try to talk me into staying. He's one of the people I wish I'd had sense enough to keep contact with. He must have been a remarkable man. He didn't do any of the judgmental things that all the other grownups I remember from childhood did. He really treated me like a human

being with the intelligence to try find my own way and as someone determined to find my own way.

"I went home and told my family what I was doing. My father didn't put up a big argument because, I think, he had lost his taste for trying to direct us. And obviously I was so far removed from his ideal of engineer that I didn't even warrant consideration.

"I thought unkindly in later years that he was probably relieved. He wouldn't have to think about paying to send me to college of any kind.

"I really would have liked to go to music school, but I never even broached the subject with him. I knew it was out of the question. That's what I mean by anti-intellectualism. I don't understand having that kind of an attitude toward your own kid. I never was that way with my own son, and can't be that way with young people."

(Gerry has one child, Reed, a son by his first and brief marriage to the daughter of Lew Brown, of the Henderson-Brown-DeSylva songwriting team.)

He said, "I like to help young people have whatever opportunities there are, in whatever ways I can, without pushing them, without telling them — the way Sammy Correnti did with me.

"I was now out of school, with no job to go to. I had to get a job in a hurry so I didn't have to go back to school ignominiously.

"I had met an agent named Jimmy Tyson. He was the agent for Alex Bartha, who had been the bandleader on the Steel Pier in Atlantic City for maybe fifteen years. What I didn't know when I was a kid was that every year he had this desire to take the band on the road and be a name band. I was infected with that! He promised he was going to take me on the road with him. Great! This was the job I thought I had. So I went down to see the agent. Jimmy said, 'Alex has been saying that for years. He's not going to take a band on the road.'

"And I thought, Oh God. I parked myself in the office of Jimmy Tyson's agency and waited for somebody to call up. Every band that came through to play at the Earl Theater, somebody would call up and say, 'I need a trombone player,' or something. And I would hear Jimmy say, 'Do you need a tenor or alto player?' I was playing tenor and alto then. And nobody ever did.

"Then Tommy Tucker came to the Earl. Same thing. He didn't need a saxophone player. So Jimmy said, 'Well do you need an arranger?' And Tommy Tucker said, 'Send him around, let me talk to him.' So I met Tommy Tucker backstage at the theater. He gave me a try. He signed me to a contract, a hundred dollars a week for two jump or three ballad arrangements. Ballads being fewer pages than the jump tunes. Copied. I had to do all the copying."

Mulligan's career detour through the Tommy Tucker band has occasionally raised eyebrows: it seems somewhat incongruous.

The band, whose radio broadcasts began with the signature announcement, "It's Tommy Tucker Time!", was in that group that drew votes in the Down Beat poll's King of Corn category, usually won by Guy Lombardo. To the hip fans of the bands, that is to say those who thought they were hip, there was a sharp division between the "jazz" and "mickey" bands, the latter including such as Blue Barron, Freddy Martin, Sammy Kaye, Russ Morgan, Kay Kyser, Shep Fields and his Rippling Rhythm, Lawrence Welk, and Wayne King. But to the professionals, the demarkation was not that sharp. I know saxophone players who thought Freddy Martin was a fine tenor player, and Benny Carter told me only recently that one of his favorite saxophone players was Wayne King, not because what King did was jazz but because it was excellent saxophone playing.

Mulligan too has this breadth of view, and I was always baffled by his stated admiration for the Guy Lombardo band, which he shared with Louis Armstrong. I was baffled, that is, until I actually saw the band in the 1970s and got to know Guy late in his life. I realized with a start, after only a tune or two from the band in person, that what I was hearing was a museum piece: an authentic, unchanged, perfectly preserved 1920s tuba-bass dance band. And it did what it did extremely well. It was, as Gerry had always insisted, a damned good band.

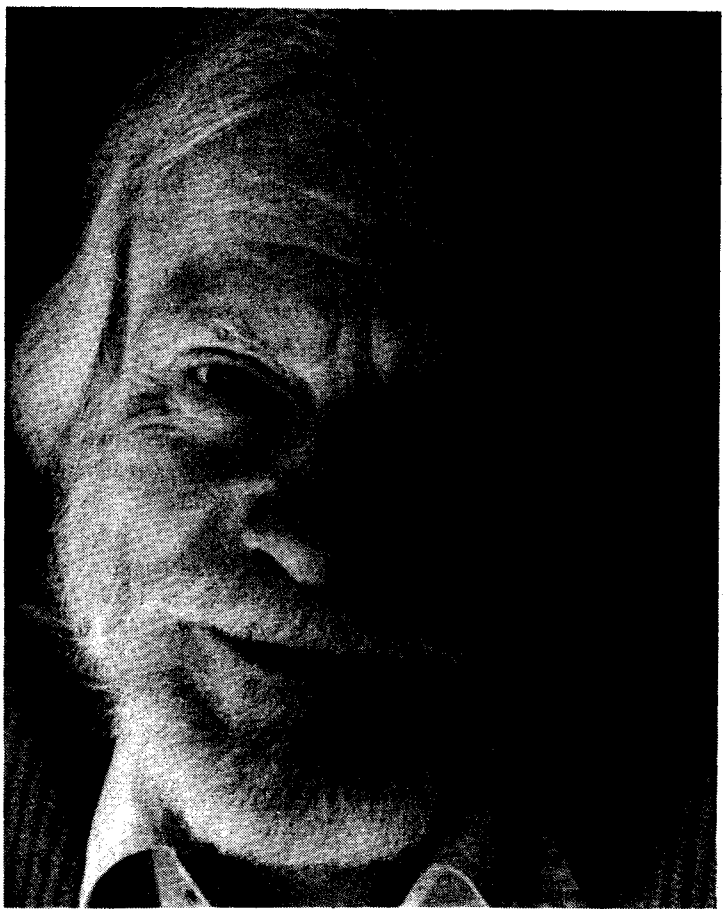

Photo by John Reeves

Many of the "mickey" — meaning Mickey Mouse — bands contained excellent musicians, and some of them, including the bands of Kay Kyser and Sammy Kaye, could play creditable swing on occasion. Some excellent arrangers cut their professional teeth in those bands. George Duning, for example, wrote for Kay Kyser. And for a short time, Gerry Mulligan wrote for Tommy Tucker.

Gerry said, "That was my first experience on the road with a name band as an arranger. That was 1945, I guess, and that would make me seventeen going on eighteen. It was the last year of the war. We traveled by cars. When we hit a town, I would be out of the car like a shot and into the hotel. Is there a room with a piano? It was always a search for a piano. And I never managed to make the three ballads or two jumps a week. But I got pretty close, wrote a lot of music for him. I was with him three months, it was a three-month contract.

"We did a lot of one-nighters. We did a month or six weeks or something at a big hotel in Chicago. I was a pig in mud. All the bands were coming through. Billy Eckstine's band came to a downtown theater with Dizzy playing trumpet with him. Earl Hines had a great band. Artie came through and Lena Horne was singing with him.

"My arrangements for Tommy started to get more and more wild, although I think Tommy liked what I did. There's one thing of mine on a Hindsight record, taken from an aircheck. It's called *Brass Hats*. I used plungers and hats. Years later, when I heard this thing, I fell off my chair, because I had copied Erskine Hawkins' *After Hours*. I didn't mean to copy it, but it was very close.

"After three months or so, Tommy said, 'It's been very nice, and you've done a lot of good things for the band, but I think you're ready to move on to another band because I think my band is a little too tame for you. I want you to know, Gerry, that if you ever want to go into business or anything like that, I really would be glad to help you — in anything except a band.'

"I never got to see Tommy after he retired, and then I found out a few years ago where he was, because a lot of friends went to Sarasota and saw him. I no sooner found out where he was than I read that he had died. I did call up his widow, a lovely woman. They were great people, and he was good to me.

"That's one thing I was lucky about. The men that I worked for were such *nice* people. Tommy Tucker, Gene Krupa, Claude Thornhill, Elliot Lawrence.

"After I left Tommy I went back to Philadelphia. Johnny Warrington was no longer at WCAU. Elliot Lawrence had taken over. Elliot had been kind of a child star in Philadelphia. He had been the bandleader on the Horn and Hardart kiddies' hour. He kind of grew into the bandleader job."

And Mulligan began to write for Elliot Lawrence. In the 1950s, some of the writing he did for Lawrence was re-recorded in an album for Fantasy.

"It was all right,"Gerry said of that album. "But it wasn't as good as some of the performances the band did at the time. Once, at a rehearsal, they played some of my music so perfectly that it made my hair stand on end. There was a unison trombone passage. The Swope brothers were in the trombone section. The section sounded like one trombone, the unison was so perfect."

Gerry moved to New York. The Birth of the Cool and a place in history lay just ahead.

(To be continued)

In Case You Missed This:
Shortchanging the Arts

When health care and welfare reform are at stake, how can a case be made for funding the arts?

There are the necessities of life — the bread and butter issues, and then there are the pleasant extras, the caviar . . . or so it is perceived.

Who would dare ask money for a symphony orchestra or a ballet company when a single child is going to bed hungry at night?

If such comparisons are to be made, the arts will never win the argument. But how about comparisons tilted in another direction?

The budget for the National Endowment for the Arts — $170 million — is smaller than the figure the Department of Defense appropriates for its 102 military bands. The budget has barely changed in twelve years, and the White House has requested the same amount for the new fiscal year beginning in October.

A single film, *Jurassic Park*, grossed enough money ($860 million) to fund the NEA budget for five years.

For her talk show, Oprah Winfrey is said to be rewarded with a sum — $60 million — amounting to more than a third of the total NEA budget.

The money Americans gamble away every year — an estimated $330 billion — makes odds of 2000 to one by comparison with the dollars invested by the NEA, and the gambler's dollars are more likely to take food out of a child's mouth than feed it.

But why go on, dwarfing the financial commitment to the arts by further comparisons with what Americans spend on pets, cosmetics, and so on? To keep the focus on money is to apply the wrong measurement . . .

There are two kinds of poverty. When the hungry child has been fed, he or she may be hungry for, say, music to hear or perhaps to create.

In underfunding its arts, the country is underestimating the needs of the spirit — ignoring how the arts nourish the members of a community and make it civilized.

If the Defense Department can spare money from a Stealth bomber to finance 102 military bands, why not just a little more small change to fund the arts?

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