Gene Lees Ad Libitum

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Ken Burns Jazz — to the Ground

Part Three

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By Richard M. Sudhalter

While watching one of the early episodes of the Ken Burns *Jazz* series, I was surprised to find myself thinking not about Louis Armstrong or any other musician present or past, but about Leni Riefenstahl. No, she insisted in talking about *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympische Spiele*, her films weren't Nazi agitprop. They were above politics, beyond ideology; done solely in the interest of *Kunst*, high art.

It was disingenuous balderdash back in Third Reich days, and balderdash it remains today. Similarly, Mr. Burns keeps telling us he's set out to tell the story of jazz as the great American experience; what he's done instead, I fear, is loose a vast political tract, a multimillion-dollar example of special pleading race for a theory of the centrality of race in twentieth century American culture — all in the guise of a series putatively about music.

That saddens me: not so much that he and his collaborators have created this artifact as the prospect of viewers sitting through it without a thought about the audacious, even insulting, deception that's been worked on them.

Jon Faddis got it right in decrying presentation of a body of disputable opinion as fact. To be sure, Albert Murray's theories about the role of the black experience have a certain strength and inner logic, and are worth discussion; but they are far from revealed truth. Other interpretations, no less responsible, will contest and contradict his at every turn.

Viewers of *Jazz* aren't permitted to hear those interpretations. Burns, and with him Murray, Marsalis, Crouch, Early, and the stunningly underqualified Margo Jefferson, are relentless in peddling their unidimensional cultural view. It's a view that activates, nurtures, and plays on the racial guilt still endemic in large numbers of white Americans. Hardly a moment goes by when some reminder of the past isn't replayed and reiterated on the screen and in the voice-overs, as if making certain no viewer tunes out or is allowed to forget.

With a boyish candor meant to be disarming, Burns has told interviewers that he regards the history of jazz as a metaphor for the story of America's civil rights. It's a clever gambit: no one of good heart and social conscience will dare publicly challenge him, for fear of being branded a racial atavism. It seems to me that Burns has it exactly backwards: rather than mirror the turbulent struggle of black Americans in a predominantly white society, jazz came about, came of age and flourished, in spite of it. The music, in other words, established its own democracy, an extraordinary freemasonry thriving in the face of society's worst depredations. It guaranteed a warm welcome and instant understanding for everyone, regardless of who he was, if he could play.

Even the phrase "our language," title of one of the episodes, sends a message that is at best ambiguous, at worst exclusionist. Does the "our" identify something solely, defensively black? Or does it refer to something understood and embraced by all who were "inside" regardless of race? I'd like to think it was the latter but fear it is the former.

Gradually, carefully, the series compounds and reinforces its message. Having sat through the entire nineteen hours, a neophyte viewer can be forgiven for thinking the entire century of jazz yielded little more than a handful of titanic figures — "geniuses," in the script's inflated language — who excelled against a field of mediocrities, pretenders, and brigands, most of them white. It's also worth noting that each time a white musician receives any credit, it is as a dropout (Beiderbecke), a popularizer (Goodman), or amanuensis to a black creator (Gil Evans to Miles). That a substantial number of white musicians also qualify as genuine innovators and trailblazers (Norvo, Teagarden, Lang, Gifford, for starters) remains unspoken and, ultimately, inadmissable. We're watching a masterful exercise in synecdoche, peddling the part as the whole.

A small personal digression here. Ken Burns interviewed me for some ninety minutes, mostly about Bix, but also about the white New York-based jazzmen of the late 1920s. With care and, I hoped, clarity, I explained how Beiderbecke brought into jazz a new emotional complexity, a layering hitherto absent from the majestic operatic conceptions of

Bechet and Armstrong. Where their utterances proceeded along a vaulting emotional arc, his looked inward, using restraint and even indirection in something of the European manner, freely mixing what might otherwise have been considered mutually contradictory elements. The white New Yorkers, I went on to say, were the universally acknowledged modernists of their time, experimenting imaginatively with form, harmony, and melodic organization.

These were innovations of far-reaching import, facilitating myriad developments now accepted as integral to jazz. Above all, they fostered new awareness in other musicians, just as Louis had done with the idea of swing. Jazz before Bix lacked a certain kind of emotional texture; jazz after him was seldom without it. Nor was that all, I said: free use of substitutions, construction of melodies based on chordal extensions, use of shifting tonal centers, experimentation with forms breaking the tyranny of two, four, and eight-bar patterns — all these traced their origins to a readily identifiable circle of early New York-based musicians who happen to have been white.

Obviously, such views comported ill with the overall "message" of *Jazz*. Therefore all that survived of our ninety-minute conversation was a pair of supremely innocuous sound bites. Instead, we were treated to Margo Jefferson blithely taking the cheapest of all shots at "Paul WhiteMAN" and expressing the truly lunatic notion that Bix (who by 1930 was distancing himself from the cornet and hot jazz in general in a quest for broader musical horizons) would somehow have been a more fully realized musician if he'd worked in black bands.

I mention this only to illustrate the degree of manipulation and outright distortion that has allowed Burns and his advisers to put across their socio-political message. In a distant sense it echoes the drumfire of social-justice propaganda that informed (or blemished, depending on how it's read) so much of the earliest critical writing about jazz; back in those prewar days the social-justice propaganda of the *New Masses* regularly trumped any merely musical consideration. It's all there, self-evident, in the writings of Fred Ramsey, Charles Edward Smith, and any number of others, including the hallowed John Hammond.

It's been heartening, at least momentarily, to read Internet parodies of the Burns series, and easy to sympathize with protests at the cavalier neglect of jazz developments since the 1960s. I'll happily add my favorites to the roll-call of key musicians scanted and slighted, in particular the cadre of often extraordinary players who surrounded Eddie Condon. To a man, they've been swept from the picture, like Stalinist-era aparachiks airbrushed out of a Politburo portrait into unpersonhood after falling from party favor.

And, too, what of the songs, the great standards that provided the raw materials for dozens of nonpareil flights of jazz fancy? We hear Louis playing *Stardust* on the soundtrack, for example, but never the name of Hoagy Carmichael. Are we really to understand that Billie Holiday's chief claim to immortality resides in the blatantly political *Strange Fruit*? Albert Murray's pet conflation notwithstanding, it wasn't all the blues: whether emanating from the Brill Building or from the Broadway stage, the pop songs were essential and indispensable. They're hardly acknowledged.

I can't help wondering what Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, men of dignity and no little humility, would have made of so many distortions and fatuous sanctifications made in their names.

I'd like to think that increasing numbers of jazzfolk, players and chroniclers alike, are aware of, and exercised over, the mischief that's been worked here. I'd like to bury the Panglossian notion that all the media hype and saturation publicity will somehow have a beneficial trickle-down effect on those of us who have spent our lives trying to prise a living out of playing jazz. But I know better: the listening and recreational habits of the public aren't about to change. However momentarily consoling to think of an Armstrong or Ellington CD sharing shelf space with Madonna and Metallica in some twenty-something's luxury Manhattan duplex, it's ultimately cold comfort.

It's been a long uphill struggle bringing the rich and varied traditions, and the joys, of a century of hot music to the attention of a generally unheeding public. I regret that the wildly disproportionate success of Burns's *Jazz* is only going to make the grade that much steeper. Leni Riefenstahl has lived long enough to witness her own disgrace; I doubt we have world enough and time to wait for Burns and his accomplices to suffer a comparable, richly deserved, fate.

— Richard M. Sudhalter

One of the more tempered responses was written by the composer and teacher Chuck Israels, who for the last sixteen years has been at Western Washington University and living in Bellingham, Washington. He writes for and conducts the Metropole Orchestra in Holland, and tours with pianist Barry Harris. Chuck first became widely known in the jazz world as a brilliant bassist who succeeded Scott LaFaro (also among the missing in *Jazz*) in the Bill Evans Trio. Chuck, born in New York City in 1936, made his recording debut in 1958 with Cecil Taylor. He played with Bud Powell, Billie Holiday, Max Roach, Don Elliott, Tony Scott, J.J. Johnson, Herbie Hancock, Gary Burton, and Hampton Hawes. George Russell and Eric Dolphy were among the many people with whom he recorded. In 1973, he founded the

National Jazz Ensemble, the first jazz repertory orchestra, years before the Jazz at Carnegie Hall program. He wrote:

By Chuck Israels

I have refrained from the fray up to now, but perhaps it's time to weigh in. It is not my intention to diminish anyone's enjoyment of the good qualities that abound in Burns' work, or in that of Wynton Marsalis, but rather to suggest that there exists the possibility of more thoughtful and even-handed approaches to projects like this.

I didn't see all of it, and I certainly liked a lot of the things I saw and heard. I also have reservations, though I'm not as irritated and angry at Burns as some seem to be. I don't think he knows a lot about the subject matter, but he knows how to create a series of interesting images and some good conversation on a rudimentary level. Comparison with Leonard Bernstein's Norton lectures, which were later turned into TV lectures (mostly about Beethoven), is ludicrous. Bernstein lost sleep over how to describe abstract musical events and relationships in words, and he became an expert at it. Marsalis hardly scratches the surface and mostly sounds pompous, asking us to take his experience and appreciation on faith. We are at fault and deficient if we don't hear what he hears and value it the way he does. (The exception being the few seconds he spent showing the intriguing design of *Epistrophy*, which he did very well, except he forgot to mention that the authorship of this piece is in doubt.) The series would have been more palatable to most of the detractors from whom I have heard if Wynton, Crouch, and Murray had been relegated to the position of the peripheral characters that they are.

There will always be problems for jazz fans who have some sense of history when Marsalis is selected as the main spokesman for this music. His exalted position is in the business of jazz as "cultural product", not as a jazz musician. In spite of his enormous skill and intelligence, there are a number of overpowering factors which direct his attention and energy to the maintenance of his public persona and positions. Too much too soon, and all the false humility is belied by the pontificating and posturing. He cannot avoid this and still maintain the benefits he receives from occupying and inflating his position. No one I know models his music on Marsalis's music, and that's a key issue. There is a lot to admire technically, but insincerity abounds. Efforts at genuine musical expressiveness come across as calculated. Little appears spontaneous to experienced ears except the quick and bright reactions to social circumstances, reactions which maintain the posture of the humble guy in the trumpet section whom we should all really recognize as "the master." This insincerity is evident and distracting to knowledgeable viewers, though perhaps not so much to the audience at whom the series is directed; people for whom Marsalis and Burns represent authority simply because of their access to money and attention.

I remember one place in the series in which Marsalis bemoans the fact that real communication doesn't happen all that often among musicians, and that he rarely experiences it. Does that have anything to do with a limitation on his part? Sometimes I think he wouldn't know "level" communications if it hit him in the face. His choices of personnel reflect this. There is little true communication without mutual vulnerability. When one person is invulnerable, there's no possibility of it. Marsalis seems to want to maintain the illusion that he's only in the game with the rest of us. He's not, and we'd all be better off if he'd admit it and take the responsibility for the power and effect of his decisions without pretense. I don't blame him for wanting to remain successful and in the center of attention, but the kind of attention he gets is more the attention of stardom than of accomplishment. Erma Bombeck said, "Madonna represents fame, Helen Keller represents success."

Then there are the sins of omission or damnation with faint praise/recognition in Burns's series. They are countless and include seminal figures. We don't need a list, but it is clearly a large one. Did I miss it, or did they omit Wes Montgomery? One could argue that the series could only emphasize a few major figures, and that argument might fly if it were a three- or four-hour show. As long as this one was, the argument becomes suspect. How many times do we need to hear about those things that feed Marsalis's aesthetic position while ignoring things that he doesn't understand or appreciate? Someone pointed out that Goodman and Shaw are portrayed as influenced by commercial popularity while Coltrane's excesses are elevated to a plane of "spirituality." In fact, there's a combination of motivation in everyone. This is hardly explored. There are interesting social questions about "why we do it" that come into play here on many levels throughout the history of the music that hardly even got asked, let alone answered.

These are things that come from Burns' reliance on the reigning royalty for direction. That's the danger of creating a document that many will view as "history" before having command of a broad and deep overview of the material. It's all done before you know you've skewed things by depending on direction from too small a sampling of "experts." Burns and Marsalis must share the blame for this; Burns for relying on Marsalis, and Marsalis for failing to direct Burns to include other more legitimate representatives.

Let's consider who gets to appear in interviews. There are too few clips of conversation with acknowledged "masters."

Were there none in the archives? Bill Evans spoke more eloquently about music and what is required to create it than most musicians, and we know that there is video footage of that. How about living musicians? Could not Horace Silver have been asked to speak about Art Blakey's influence, or his own? How many situations has Clark Terry experienced about which he could provide insight? How about Percy Heath, Roy Haynes, Jimmy Cobb, Bob Brookmeyer, Jim Hall, Ray Brown, Donald Byrd, J.J. Johnson, Joe Wilder, and Benny Carter, who has lived creatively through so much of the history of this music? There is instead another pontifical moment with one of the anointed.

So, what do I think? I think that it is essential to understand that all of the greatest examples of this music were created during an unusual period when popular music and this more ambitious art music shared the same data base. The materials of construction were the same, and the audiences overlapped. This situation no longer exists, so jazz, if it is to survive, must find another way of communicating with its audience. Marsalis and I agree on many of the basic ways that this might be done, but we disagree on some too. If the audience is as dumb as he treats it sometimes, it is demeaning to give in to the impulse to explain oneself to it — better to suffer its neglect in favor of a deeper and more meaningful relationship with more informed listeners. Fame and recognition are powerful drugs and they fuel a materialistic system with which we must all come to terms. The terms required by good art are often more exigent and exist in different areas of communication than those required by the demands of public success.

— Chuck Israels

Among the many important subjects *Jazz* does not explore is this:If jazz bespeaks the black experience, and only blacks can play it, why does it have, and has had since its beginning, such appeal to people of all races and nationalities? What is there in this music that would electrify a white boy in Canada, namely me? I cannot count how many letters I receive in which the writer says something to the effect, "The first time I heard jazz I was . . . ."

That first exposure usually lingers vividly in memory. Why were six or seven thousand *white* people in an arena with me when I first saw Ellington? *They* weren't responding to this music because they were full of rage or regret over slavery and at last had found a voice to express these emotions. Jazz became a world music, and quite quickly. I am friends with two French writers who specialize in jazz, Paul Benkimoun and Alain Gerber. Paul in fact is a physician who is the medical correspondent for *Le Monde*. Each of them, particularly Alain, has written me letters explaining the passion he had for jazz from the moment of first exposure. Musicians from behind what used to be called the Iron Curtain will often tell how they were instantly enthralled by the Voice of America jazz broadcasts of the late Willis Conover — someone else, incidentally, who isn't even mentioned in the series, though he did more than any man in the music's history to spread it around the world, and he — and this music — did more to bring down the Iron Curtain than all the politicians and generals and armies put together.

. Why has a similar experience of instantly musical love not occurred in people suddenly exposed to Indian ragas, Japanese koto music, or Chinese opera, which remains as opaque to Westerners as the Chinese language itself? What is there in Chinese opera that we just don't get — and in jazz that we *do*? What gave it this enormous and often instantaneous appeal? This is an awesome question. It isn't even addressed in *Jazz,* much less answered..

Jazz, in the end, gives me what it gave Jon Faddis: the blues of sadness — sadness for a lost opportunity. This series *could* have been: the finest instructional and introductory tool the music has ever known, something I could recommend to anyone. It is appallingly distorted, driven by the payback agenda of Murray, Crouch, and Marsalis.

In addition to all the other shortcomings other writers have discussed, I have a few further reservations of my own. I demur with those who think it is good television and good movie-making. It is meandering, murky, and unclear. You get into one area of time, say the development of Miles Davis, and you find you are suddenly back with Armstrong and Ellington. It keeps looping. It is also, quite often, chronologically wrong. It says that Goodman's sudden success in 1936 caused the launching of the swing bands, one of which in its list is the Casa Loma. Wrong. The Casa Loma, formed in 1927, appeared at the Roseland Ballroom in New York and made its first record in 1929, and enjoyed its biggest success between 1930 and 1935. Artie Shaw says the Casa Loma, under Glen Gray, and with the influential arrangements of Gene Gifford, launched the swing era.

Or Frank Sinatra. listed among singers who came up after the war, and shown entering the Paramount Theater with girls mobbing the doors. That happened in 1943. In discussing bebop right after the war, a still photo shows Horace Silver in the foreground. Horace was still in Connecticut at that time; he didn't move to New York until 1951.

Had Burns hired some scrupulous scholars such as Kenny Washington, instead of listening to the Holy Trinity, such errors (and there are many more) would not have occurred.

Having said that, I must add that to certain adults who want to learn about jazz, I will recommend it, with the advisory that it is propaganda. But it's a place to start, and

after that one can start to scrape away the crap, as I had to do in my youth after having exposure to the Gospel According to Saint John the Hammond. We keep returning to Voltaire's dictum that history is a fiction that has been agreed upon. In the case of *Jazz*, however, it isn't agreed upon.

Burns has defended himself for all the omissions by saying he couldn't include everybody who mattered. What? In nineteen hours. If he had omitted all the babbling in the film, he could have cut it to ten hours. If he had devoted a full hour to each of the heroes he celebrates, instead of jumping back and forth in time, he would have had a far more cohesive and unified narrative — and about fourteen hours to expend on major figures he omitted. Where are the Jones boys, Thad, Elvin, and Hank? Where is Gerald Wilson? I too missed Wes Montgomery. Bud Powell gets thirty-seven seconds (I counted them) playing *Get Happy*, plus one other brief mention for a drug bust. The Modern Jazz Quartet fares better: it gets about two minutes, though has been one of the most successful and long-lived groups (not to mention exquisite) in jazz history. Oscar Peterson gets a two-second mention while being seen in a still photo, in a list of fast flash-bys of photos of people who played with the Norman Granz Jazz at the Philharmonic tours. And Granz gets two minutes and twenty seconds, almost all of it for what he did for race relations and civil rights, not what he did for music. Where are Ray Brown, J.J. Johnson, Herb Ellis, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Zutty Singleton, Don Redman, Gene Ammons, Stuff Smith, Eddie South, Joe Venuti, and Carmen McRae? And the Clarke-Boland Big Band, established in Europe and led by Kenny Clarke and Francy Boland? It was one of the finest big bands in the history of this music, and Boland one of its most brilliant composers. There is nothing about the expansion of jazz into other countries, or about the huge acceptance of jazz in Japan.There is nothing about the enormous expansion of jazz education in the U.S. and Canada, including Berklee and the program at North Texas University. There is nothing about the remarkable evolution of bass playing from Blanton through Ray Brown and Oscar Pettiford to Red Mitchell and Scott LaFaro and the enormous number of bass players influenced by LaFaro's fluid technique.

Many parts of *Jazz* are misleading, or ill-informed, or deliberately mendacious: for example, Miles Davis, Gil Evans, and the evolution of "cool" jazz. Without even considering Benny Carter's much earlier use of restrained and subtle emotional expression, Miles did not invent "cool" jazz and he assuredly did not organize the nonet that supposedly he formed to express his ideas. Gil was hardly his amanuensis: Miles was fascinated by Gil's writing.

If anyone should be credited with inventing "cool," it was Claude Thornhill, who established a floating vibratoless sound in his band, expressing his ideas through arrangers Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan, and Bill Borden. In gatherings at Gil Evans' apartment on West 55th Street, Mulligan, Evans, and others wondered with how small an instrumentation they could get something like the Thornhill sound, and they began writing for what became the nonet. A number of the musicians were alumni of the now-vanished Thornhill band, including Lee Konitz and Mulligan. Pianist Gene DiNovi, who was one of those who used to hang out there (along with Charlie Parker and John Lewis, among others) said, "Gil's was the mind that we minded." Some of the writing came from Johnny Carisi, some from John Lewis, some from Gil, but the bulk of it was by Mulligan. Mulligan and others affirm that Miles was allowed leadership because he would organize the rehearsals and got the group the only live engagement it ever played. But that Miles was the driving force in that band and that movement is nonsense. Even Miles told me that.

Had Burns cut out a lot of the crap, he might, too, have had time to explain to the layman how jazz is played, perhaps with illustrations at the piano keyboard. There's a lot of talk about "chord changes" and "chord progressions," but no explanation for the layman of what the terms mean.

Gary Giddins says, "It was while he was playing *Cherokee* that [Parker] came, he said, to his great discovery. Parker figured out that he could play any note, any note in the scale, and that he could resolve it within the chord, so that it would sound harmonically right. This was the great discovery."

The practice far predates jazz. Not being sure how far back it goes, I contacted my musicologist friend Dr. Dominique de Lerma, prominent in black-music research and now teaching at Lawrence University, to ask. He said, "Before Monteverdi!"

Phil Woods said, "That old saw about Bird discovering upper partials while playing *Cherokee* has been around for years. The point of course is that the melody of this bridge is built on upper partials, proving beyond a doubt that Ray Noble invented bebop."

Something else Giddins said was not only ignorant but just plain wrong. He said of Sarah Vaughan: "People make the mistake of calling her, y'know, operatic, saying that if she wanted to she could have been an opera singer, and I think they are missing the point. She had the range but she had no interest in that kind of singing." Oh?

I don't know how well Giddins knew Sarah, but she was one of my close friends. She recorded a lot of my songs, and I wrote an entire album for her, which was recorded in Germany. I coached her on the very difficult material for nearly a week, working six and eight hours a day with her,

and stood with her in the recording studio as she did overdubs, holding her hand because she was frightened. She ended one song with a high and perfect operatic flourish. I laughed. She said, in that dear little girl's voice, "Should I *do* that?" to which I said, "Yeah, leave it in!"

She and Dizzy Gillespie and I were once guests on the Steve Allen show. Dizzy said she had four octaves of range. She said to me later, "Shit, the day I've got four octaves, I'm calling the newspapers." But I think she did have.

She and Joe Williams (and where is he in the series?) were the only singers in the history of jazz who had technical equipment equal to that of the best opera singers. She was friends with Marilyn Horne. And she was particularly good friends with Leontyne Price. Indeed, toward the end of her life, she asked me to come over to her house (we lived not far apart). She said that she and Leontyne wanted to do a tour together, with duets, and Sarah singing arias and Price singing American songs. Did I think it was a good idea? Yes. Would I help them put it together, choose material, and so forth? Write continuity for them? Yes.

And she asked if I thought she could sing the role of Mimi in *La Bohème.* Yes. "You could also do *Aida.*" And this is not because I make opera the measure of music. I don't even like opera. But she liked it, and could have done it. I didn't miss the point; Gary Giddins did.

We have heard in this discussion only from professionals, musicians and critics alike. What about the lay listener? What did this series do for such persons? I have no way of doing a large survey, but I did find one opinion particularly interesting. It is that of a graphic artist named Milo Garfield, who has an interest in but limited knowledge (by her own statement) of jazz. She said:

> I found it extremely frustrating. I am coming to it from a totally different place. I was willing to tolerate the racism because I realized it couldn't be everything to everyone and it certainly made its bias clear early on. So I just viewed it as a very narrow version of a bigger story. The omissions I could identify, such as Bill Evans, made me nuts, but again, I was willing to relax and submit.
>
> What eventually frustrated me was that I felt it failed as an appreciation course. Burns decided to go one route without fulfilling a greater obligation, which I felt was to lift away the intimidation factor which ignorance creates. I feel that anyone who came to the show in total ignorance would not leave it wanting more. The racism ended up making jazz a political extension. I think it alienated a lot of people coming to this show with an open mind and willingness to learn. The incessant hammering on a point can only create dullness.
>
> I was excited to finally put music and names together, but I don't know how exciting the show would be for people who didn't know any names to begin with or whose ears were completely new. I don't know what approach would successfully please educated listeners while making the music irresistible to ignorant ones. But then, I am not making a nineteen-hour jazz special either.

The dust-up is not over. Such is the anger over this series that a symposium is being organized in San Francisco to explore its errors, omissions, and follies. I am told one has already been held in Oregon.

Perhaps the best summation of the series and the situation to date comes from saxophonist and composer Bill Kirchner, a considerable scholar who commissioned and edited all the essays in the monumental recent *Oxford Companion to Jazz* (an invaluable source). Kirchner said:

"One of the primary subliminal subtexts of *Jazz* is 'Wynton Marsalis: The Infomercial.' From an estimated (by a reliable source) 103 talking-head appearances by Marsalis throughout the film to his anointing in the final episode (replete with baby pictures) as the Savior of Jazz, that's one of the very unsubtle messages Burns is sending. And to make the Final Anointing possible, Burns essentially erased the contributions of an entire generation of musicians active in the 1970s. This is a disgraceful distortion of history, and that Burns and Geoffrey Ward did it and Marsalis approved it, as he no doubt did (where else would Burns have gotten Marsalis's childhood photos?) is unconscionable."

Phil Woods said, "But jazz will survive — or will it? Maybe it is over and Marsalis-Crouch-Murray-Burns just pushed the coffin into the grave."

But hold! Soft now. I have seen the light! We have all been missing the point! Louis Armstrong is God, Albert Murray is John the Baptist, Wynton Marsalis is the Risen Savior, Stanley Crouch is Peter (on this rock I will build my church) and Ken Burns is Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. Thus endeth the lesson.

His feelings apparently hurt that the jazz people into whose world he had intruded with such mischievous ignorance didn't bow down to worship him, Burns took to referring to them from on high as "the jazzerati." In Toronto, he had a tone of injured petulance in an interview with *Maclean's* magazine: You'd think I'd driven a spike through the heart of jazz instead of quadrupling its audience."

Poor self-enamored fellow. He just doesn't get it. He *was* the spike. Wynton Marsalis drove it.