Gene Lees Ad Libitum &

Jazzletter

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Mail Bag

I am delighted to tell you that I have been wrong in my expressed fear of racist influence on the election. I'm sure some exists but it has become irrelevant in our modern culture. This is truly the demonstrated historic turning point in the political and social life of our nation. We should be grateful for the opportunity to take part in this transformation. We should be humble in victory and proud of America.

Congratulations to us. And to our next president, thank you for your consistent embodiment of our better nature, our vision for the future, and the values that made America the great light of the world. November 4, 2008, will be regarded by future historians as the moment we turned away from fear and embraced hope. I have never in my life been happier to be wrong.

— Mike Melvoin, Los Angeles

I have just spent a hugely pleasant time reading *Portrait of Johnny*, I want to thank you for a book that really needed writing. I was beginning to despair of anybody producing a book about Mercer. Sadly I am not a writer and did no more than cherish the thought that I might one day retire and write one myself. *Whispering Sideways* might have been a good title! Anyhow, you've saved me a job. Having finished reading the book, the picture that you paint is of a "lovely man, but a lousy drunk."

I do agree with your critique of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* but would take issue about the lyric of *Spring Spring Spring*. I think that there are some great Harburgian rhymes in the song and you gotta hand it to a guy who can come up with "How busy can a bumble bee?"

Incidentally, do you know Ella Fitzgerald's rendering of *This Time the Dream's on Me*? I know of no finer interpretation of a Mercer lyric, and the icing on top is a jaw-dropping alto solo from Benny Carter.

Finally you make no mention of Ellington's *Satin Doll.* The words may seem a little dated, if class can ever be said to date, but it's still a great song. Do you know how it came to be written? Was it just one of those tunes that he heard on the radio, or was he commissioned to write it?

Once again, thank you for a most informative and obviously affectionate book about the man, his life, and his work.

— Stuart Freed

Among the better bits of advice on writing are these aphorisms:

As soon as you write a line you like, strike it out.

Kill your darlings.

Writers often get hung up on lines or phrases, which tend to distort the whole. When my father was a young man in England, studying painting and violin, his art teacher criticized a portrait he had just done. He defended it, saying, "Look at the detail in the eye!" The teacher said, "You're not painting an eye, you're painting a face."

And, my father said, the teacher was right.

It reminds me of something Dizzy used to say: "It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you leave out."

As for "Kill your darlings," it means to get rid of your pet phrases lest they distort the whole. One of the reasons I dislike The Alexandria Quartet *is that Durrell doesn't kill his darlings. I recently made my umpteenth attempt to read James Joyce's* Ulysses *only to penetrate a bare forty pages into its briar patch. Joyce purportedly said something to the effect that it would take scholars a hundred years to decipher the meaning of his writing, to which some woman is said to have commented, "It is not the career I had planned for my children." Some writers write to reveal, others to obfuscate and, I sometimes think, to conceal that they don't have all that much to say. I like what Norman Mailer said: "I write to find out what I think."*

One of the best things I ever read about writing came, as I recall, from Somerset Maugham: The greatest style is no style at all.

Had I written "How busy can a bumble bee?" I would have stricken it out. But then I never would have considered it in the first place.

And I find the lyric for Satin Doll *to be too cute.*

As I mentioned in the book, Mercer nearly put me on the sidewalk with laughter one night in New York singing what he called "a medley of my flops."

Gene: Just finishing Woody's biography. I read chunks with morning coffee and you are really fucking up my mornings. I have to tear myself away to get a day started. Also have *Cats of Any Color* to read.

I too loved Woody and it ends with a heartbreak, all too usual for this country.

So, many thanks for such a lovely flow and for bringing back some dear memories. Hope you are well, thriving and writing.

— Bob Brookmeyer

Brookmeyer

Brookmeyer undoubtedly has no idea what an important place he holds in my life. My admiration for him as a trombonist and pianist and, particularly, arranger and composer, knows no bounds.

Not long after I became editor of *Down Beat* in the spring of 1959, I wrote a column about Robert Farnon. At that time the editors of *Jazz Review* were Nat Hentoff and Hsiu Wen Shi. Hentoff (who had worked as New York editor of *Down Beat*) had an abiding contempt for *Down Beat* which, in due course, I came to share. Hsiu Wen Shi wrote a piece attacking me for writing about Farnon, saying that I seemed to be unduly impressed by arrangers. Anyone with ears is impressed by the good ones, and in my pantheon at that time were Sy Oliver, Paul Weston, Ralph Burns, Ernie Wilkins (oh the exquisite detail of his writing!), Frank Comstock, Eddie Sauter, Bill Finegan, Billy May, Billy Byers, Pete Rugulo, Buck Clayton, Neal Hefti, Mel Powell, Gerry Mulligan, Bob Brookmeyer, and quite a few more. I find myself wondering if Hsiu Wen Shi was incapable of hearing multiple lines. Or he may well have thought that one should only write about jazz in *Down Beat* and Farnon's glorious writing for large orchestra wasn't jazz. The fact was that a lot of jazz soloists, including J.J. Johnson and Oscar Peterson, wanted to and eventually did record with Farnon, and every jazz arranger I've ever known acknowledges debts to Farnon, whom André Previn called "the world's greatest string writer."

Jazz solos, excepting that of keyboard players and to a lesser extent guitarists, are largely a matter of single lines, one-note-at-a-time. For harmony and counterpoint, you need two or more instruments, and the good arrangers did indeed impress me, for they were able to utilize these resources, and the best of them beautifully. Bill Evans, as I've mentioned before, used the term "contemplative composition" for written music, and "spontaneous composition" for any kind of improvised music, not limiting the term to jazz. (Brookmeyer and Bill made a fascinating two-piano album called *The Ivory Hunters*.) Bill also said that any music that was not in some way in touch with the process of improvisation was likely to be sterile. What, I asked, about the composer sitting writing on a piece of score paper? Bill said, "He may well be improvising."

When I joined *Down Beat* in that May of 1959, I realized that I would be dealing with all sorts of people whom I had long admired from a distance. I was not intimidated as much as leery. What were they all like? I asked one of my predecessors as editor, Jack Tracy, who might prove difficult. Without hesitation he said, "Miles Davis, Buddy Rich, and Gerry Mulligan." As events unfolded, I became friends with all three. It was Brookmeyer who introduced me to Mulligan.

I was in New York on business for the magazine. Someone took me to Charlie's Tavern, one of the several hangouts of jazz musicians, and I ran into Jimmy Raney. I knew Jimmy from my days as music and drama editor of the *Louisville Times*. Jimmy was a native of Louisville, and I met him during one of his trips home to visit family.

Jimmy was sitting at the bar with Bob Brookmeyer, having a few drinks. He asked me to join them. Brookmeyer had just driven non-stop from his home town, Kansas City, Missouri, in a small car he had at that time — a Morris Minor, if memory serves me. I spent that evening with Bob and Jimmy. I remember his graciousness to me. Years later, I reminded him of it, saying that on joining *Down Beat* I was a little scared. He said, with a smile, "Well, the least we could do was to make you comfortable."

I had known Brookmeyer's playing chiefly through the Gerry Mulligan Quartet after he replaced Art Farmer. He was with the group from 1954 to 1957. Brookmeyer and Mulligan both had a taste for counterpoint. The quartet was often referred to as pianoless, as if this were a truly strange aberration of instrumentation. But the string quartet doesn't use piano, and there is a certain logic to it. The keyboards use the tempered scale, which entails a falsification of tones to permit playing in various keys. The tones in this "equal temperament" system are very subtly not "pure". Get rid of the piano, and you can make true pitch. Interestingly, both Mulligan and Brookmeyer were pianists as well as horn

players. (And Bill played flute and violin.)

Mulligan told me that he formed what came to be known as the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band in order to have an instrument to write for, but he soon found himself caught up in the workaday duties of business that he had little time to write. The writing duties fell to Brookmeyer, who in essence was the straw boss of that orchestra, effectually its concert master.

I first heard the band at the Newport Jazz Festival in July 1960. Night had fallen, and it was raining. I was chatting with Dizzy Gillespie in the band tent behind the stage when the Mulligan band was announced. It was, if I recall, its premiere performance, and Dizzy said, "I have to hear this," and went out. I followed. The Voice of America was filming the festival that year, and their crew had set up a shed at stage left. It protected their equipment from the rain. The band played what has been called *Django's Castle* in America. In France, it is called *Manoir de mes rêves*, Manor of My Dreams, a lovely title. The chart, which I did not know at the time, is Brookmeyer's, and it is one of the most beautiful pieces of ballad writing in the history of jazz. The experience of hearing it that night was almost surrealistic: I could see what the camera was seeing on the TV monitors, and at the same time see the reality almost at eye level. The camera panned across the crowds of black umbrellas with raindrops dancing off them, and then just at the point when Mulligan began his obligato passage, it came to rest on a puddle on the stage in which was reflected, upside down, Mulligan's image. When, quite a while later, I told Gerry about this experience, he said that even the description of it gave him chills. "It made the hair stand up on my arm," he said.

After that Newport performance, Mulligan came to Chicago — location of the *Down Beat* office — to play a week at the Sutherland Hotel on the South Side. It was in a black neighborhood in a time when Chicago was much more segregated than it is now. I talked to Brookmeyer, and at an intermission, he invited me up to the "band room" on the second floor for a drink. It was actually a suite comprising a large living room and a bedroom. Mulligan was in the bedroom in the middle of a row with one of the musicians over a rhythmic question. When they came out of that room, he took one look at me and said, "Who the hell are you?" I told him and he said, "That's all I need right now — the press."

I said, "You don't think I'd write anything about this, do you?" And he simmered down.

Mulligan was especially cranky during that engagement, for a reason Brookmeyer told me about later. Gerry was very much involved with actress Judy Holiday. She was in hospital in New York for a mastectomy: she had dropped out of a play for that reason. The despicable, indeed monstrous and cruel, columnist Dorothy Kilgallen had written that it was amazing what a story a certain actress could invent to get out of a play she didn't like. It was absolutely untrue, vile, filthy and indolently dishonest. During that Sutherland engagement, Mulligan would finish the gig each night and catch a red-eye flight to New York to be with Judy and reassure her, then fly back to Chicago late in the day in time for the gig. I am to amazed that he held up that week.

But that was the circumstance in which Brookmeyer introduced me to Mulligan. And Mulligan and I became friends and in due course very close friends. The friendship lasted until the end of his life.

Brookmeyer and Mulligan were among the habitués of Jim and Andy's, one of four bars in New York patronized by jazz musicians. Jim and Andy's was by far the favorite, and a lot of us used to hang out there. At the end of an afternoon, when the recording studio sessions ended, the place would fill it up with famous names, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Clark Terry, Lockjaw Davis, Will Bradley, Eddie Safranski and many more. It seemed our lives revolved around that place.

In October, 1962, during the two weeks of the Cuban missile crisis, everyone thought that New York City would be the primary target in what seemed the certainty of an atomic war, and there was absolutely nothing one could do about it. I endured the tension by staying half loaded. Indeed, I remember that almost every afternoon, I would sit in one of the booths with Brookmeyer, drinking — with gallows humor — Moscow mules.

At one point, I got a call from Mulligan from somewhere on the road. He said that Judy had had a recurrence of symptoms and was waiting for the results of the latest tests. He said he couldn't be there, and she was frightened, and asked me if I would go over to her apartment and keep her company, which of course I did. She lived only a few blocks from me in the Dakota, that venerable castle on 72nd Street facing Central Park. I adored Judy, and so did everyone who knew her. She came to national prominence with her performance as Billie Dawn in the film *Born Yesterday* opposite Broderick Crawford. That role came to haunt her, because producers and others were always after her to reprise it in other projects. But she was anything but the dumb blonde of that story. She had taken that part in the stage version of the show when Jean Arthur dropped out. She wasn't even the understudy. Legend had it that she memorized the part in twenty-four or forty-eight hours and went on to perform it

impeccably and brilliantly. The legend was true. She had an I.Q. of 178.

Curiously, she almost didn't get the part in the movie version. Harry Cohn, the loathsome head of Columbia Pictures, tested everyone in sight for it. He said Judy was "too Jewish." But in the end he had to surrender. Cohn was famous for treating every girl he signed to pictures as part of his private harem. He threatened to destroy the career of Evelyn Keyes, eventually the wife of Artie Shaw, and if he didn't succeed in that, he certainly damaged it. Another girl signed to Columbia was a British actress named Valerie French, who became a close friend of mine when she did a publicity tour for the western *Jubal*, in which she played opposite Glenn Ford and Ernest Borgnine. She wrote me a letter saying that Harry Cohn had finally hit on her. She turned him down, and she wrote, "I guess my career in Hollywood is over." It was. She went back to the stage in New York.

Judy knew Cohn's reputation. After signing the contract for *Born Yesterday*, she told me, she went for her first meeting with him in his office. He tried to grope her. She pushed him away — and Judy was physically quite strong. (She once threw Leonard Bernstein, whom she despised, down the flight of stairs in front of her apartment door in the Dakota.) Cohn fell into a typist's chair, which rolled across the floor. During those seconds, she thought, "There goes my movie career." The chair hit the wall, dumping Cohn on the floor. He looked at her in rage, and then started to laugh. Why, she did not know. But her movie career flourished, and she made some superb pictures, such as *The Solid Gold Cadillac*, all of which I find painful to watch.

She had a warm and generous heart, and, like so many people gifted at comedy, a deeply melancholy nature. She told Willis Conover that she'd spent her childhood pulling her mother's head out of a gas oven. She once told an interviewer that she hardly remembered her childhood. She was incredibly sensitive to people, right down to reading the timbre of the voice. Once, in a mood bordering on the despondent, I called Mulligan, looking for companionship, but he didn't answer, so I called Judy, thinking he might be with her. She said he was out of town, and then asked, "What's the matter?" Nothing, I said. She said, "It doesn't sound like it. You sound as if you need a little body warmth. Why don't you come over?" She lived three and a half blocks from me, so I made it over to her place in the Dakota in, probably, ten minutes, and spent another evening with her, talking about all sorts of things. I think every man who knew her was in some dimension in love with her. That was true, by the way, of Valerie French as well.

Gerry and Judy both loved the playing of Zoot Sims, who was Irish. Mulligan told me that one night he and Judy went to hear Zoot and Al Cohn, and as Zoot played a descending figure, she said, "There he goes — playing that Barry Fitzgerald tenor." And she imitated Fitzgerald's ah-ha-ha descending laugh.

Judy was deeply musical. She sang well; she had been doing it since she was four; and she was learning to play flute from Julius Baker of the New York Philharmonic. She was also — her childhood ambition had been to be a writer or a director — an excellent lyricist. She and Mulligan wrote a full score for a musical based on the Anita Loos play *Happy Birthday*. She and Gerry performed it for me. It has never been performed on the stage, although some of the songs are found in an LP she and Mulligan made together. The story is Irish. Hal Prince turned the project down, saying, "Jews go to theater. The Irish go to bars."

Her circle of friends included Willis Conover, whose jazz broadcasts under the name *Music USA*, in my opinion (and I am not alone) did more to bring down the Iron Curtain than all the military bluster and threatening presidents the western world could muster, composer Alec Wilder, Paul Desmond, Brookmeyer, and myself.

The last time I saw Judy was at the bottom of the stairs at Birdland: Mulligan was great at pub-crawling to listen to other musicians. I knew she had been through another test, and I put my arms around her and said, "How're you feeling, my darling?" She said, "Rotten, but at least I know I'm not going to die." It was the last thing she ever said to me.

I was in Paris for a while to write adaptations of some of Charles Aznavour's songs for his one-man show on Broadway. When I got home there was a taxi strike under way. I took the subway to get to Jim and Andy's, planning to pick up my luggage later. When I came up from underground on Sixth Avenue I saw a stack of newspapers, the *New York Post*, with a big front-page headline: **Judy Holiday Dies**. Quite shaken, I entered Jim and Andy's, where no doubt I encountered a lot of the regulars, including Brookmeyer.

Mulligan was so devastated that informally Willis Conover, the novelist Joseph Heller, and I took up a round-the-clock vigil to see that he was not alone. Judy's funeral was limited to family and friends. I was one of those invited. I could not sleep the night before. I stayed awake, and when the morning came I simply couldn't bring myself to attend. When I next ran into Brookmeyer, I learned that he too couldn't bring himself to attend.

Brookmeyer's singular characteristic as a soloist is the compositional nature of his playing. There are various ways

to play jazz. You can learn the scales and know which scales go with which chords and use them in whole or in part. Other devices may be incorporated into the work. But Bob's playing was especially notable for his way of taking a musical idea and developing it in the course of a solo, almost as if he were at the desk writing it on paper. Roger Kellaway does this. He told me once that he got it from Brookmeyer, especially during the period when he played piano with the quartet led by Brookmeyer and Clark Terry, one of the inspired pairings in all jazz because they were so different but so compatible.

That group's home base was the old Blue Note on Houston Street in the warehouse district of the lower Village in that part of New York old enough that the streets were still paved with the original bricks.

If you remember the place, run by the Canterino family, you will recall the bandstand that was placed between the bar and the full dining room. Roger said that the piano was so placed that he couldn't see Clark and Bob: his back was to them. And so he listened with full, undistracted concentration. And he absorbed a lot of Brookmeyer's compositional approach.

I mentioned this to Bob once. And he said that he got it from Jimmy Raney. Jimmy was a gentle, highly intelligent man who in his later days returned to Louisville, where a cruel fate gradually rendered him deaf, and his years of drinking finally deprived him of life.

Bob was a founding member of and arranger for the Mel Lewis-Thad Jones band, then moved to Holland where he wrote for several years. Musicians are cognizant of his abilities, but I don't think he has ever had the recognition by the public or, for that matter, the press that he deserves.

Of the crowd that populated Jim and Andy's, Brookmeyer is one of the few who are still left. This may be sad, but it is inevitable. Generations come and go. But I am especially glad that Bob is still here, and perhaps you'll see why his letter had special meaning to me. And while I'm at it, let me say that Bob's chart on *Manoir de Mes Rêves* remains one of the haunting experiences of my musical life.

I am eternally grateful to Bob for initiating my friendship with Mulligan. And that in turn led to my friendship with the outstanding bass player Bill Crow, who, with Mel Lewis on drums with the Gerry Mulligan concert band, constituted one of the finest rhythm sections I've ever heard.

Some of Bill's earliest essays were published in the *Jazzletter*.

Recently Bill — some of whose first writing was published in the *Jazzletter* — sent me this:

Jeru

By Bill Crow

I think it's time for a reminder about the Gerry Mulligan era in jazz. Gerry left a very large musical footprint from the fifties through the nineties, but he isn't mentioned a lot lately. At the height of his success, Gerry was the dominant baritone saxophonist in the world, and his inventions in big band arranging and in small group structure left a lasting mark on the collective jazz ear.

While he was mastering his instrument, Gerry developed a reputation for being the world's foremost sitter-in. He would walk onto any bandstand with his horn and would prove his right to be there by playing superbly. At the first few Newport Jazz Festivals he managed to sit in with every one of his idols, from Duke to Dizzy. For one festival, Ellington wrote a special composition featuring Gerry and Harry Carney in duet.

I knew about Gerry as an arranger, but didn't know his playing until I met him in 1950 at a jam session at the studio of painter/saxophonist Larry Rivers. (I was a valve trombone player in those days.) I saw Gerry around the city during the next year or so while I was learning to play the bass, and then played bass with him once on a drummer's pick-up job, but we didn't get to be friends until after he spent some time in California, where he developed his piano-less quartet with Chet Baker. In 1954, when he came back to New York with a sextet and called me to replace the departing Peck Morrison, I began what became an eleven year association with Gerry that developed my playing and gave me the opportunity to work with some wonderful musicians.

Gerry's '54 sextet, with Zoot Sims, Bob Brookmeyer, Jon Eardley, Dave Bailey and me, soon became a quartet again, with Brookmeyer. In a later quartet, Brookmeyer was replaced by Art Farmer. I happily toured with that group, but in late 1959 I decided to remain in New York when Gerry went to California for an extended stay. His quartet broke up there when Farmer and Bailey left to form the Jazztet with Benny Golson.

After making a couple of movies in California, Gerry put together his Concert Jazz Band. It was something he'd had in mind for quite a while, and the movie money made it possible. To get a music library together right away, he had Bill Holman expand some of the quartet and sextet material. And he used several of Johnny Mandel's wonderful compositions from the movie *I Want to Live*. Gerry's intention was always to get back to big band writing, but his duties as

bandleader and soloist took up most of his time, so his arrangements for the Concert Jazz Band were few.

When they returned to New York from a tour of Europe, Conte Candoli and Buddy Clark left the band to go home to L.A., and Clark Terry and I replaced them. Between bookings for the band, Gerry again worked with a quartet, with Brookmeyer, Mel Lewis and myself. (When the band finally expired, Gus Johnson replaced Mel in the quartet.) We rehearsed once a week, whether or not there were gigs, and the band attracted the interest of arrangers like Al Cohn, Gary McFarland and Wayne Shorter, who all wrote things for us. And, of course, Brookmeyer was writing, too.

At one rehearsal, Gerry brought in a stack of music paper and began handing out parts. We all thought, "Ah, Gerry has begun to write again!" But when we played what he had given us, it turned out to be the same eight-bar phrase orchestrated ten different ways. He was thinking about arranging, but hadn't come up with an arrangement yet.

Even though he or Brookmeyer would sometimes play a tune on the piano, Gerry wanted the core sound of the Concert Jazz Band to be the pianoless quartet. The band played moderately softly most of the time, always coming back down to that quartet sound for the beginnings of solos. Gerry told us at a rehearsal, "We can have just as much dynamic effect going from mezzo piano to forte as we can from forte to triple-forte. But at the softer level, you can hear all the inside parts, and that's what I want to hear."

We concentrated on blend and tone quality, and the sound of the band was always rich. Mel Lewis and I got along well together as the rhythm section, and the section leaders, Nick Travis, Bob Brookmeyer and Gene Quill, knew how to keep the sound where Gerry wanted it.

Another thing that made that band unusual was Gerry's approach to the accompaniment of soloists. With the quartets, he liked to improvise harmony lines on his baritone behind the other horn, and liked to hear the same thing behind his own solos. On the big band, he would have the rest of the musicians join in on the backgrounds. Behind a soloist, Gerry would set a figure and the saxes would harmonize it, and then the brass would add counter-figures. While this was developing, the soloist might get five or six choruses. Except on ballads, we never went on to the next written section until Gerry gave us the cue. As a result, arrangements often were opened up into very long versions

Blueport, on the album Verve recorded live at the Village Vanguard, displays the inventiveness of the band during a very long exchange of fours between Gerry and Clark Terry.

Actually, even though it goes on for quite a while on record, that rendition was much longer originally. Gerry found a spot on the tape where a couple of minutes could be seamlessly excised, to make it short enough for an LP.

The Concert Jazz Band was one of Gerry's finest achievements, but it couldn't survive the economic realities of the 1960s. Gerry reluctantly broke it up after the summer of 1961, getting it together again occasionally over the next couple of years for a week or two at Birdland.

Gerry wrote a beautiful piece called *Night Lights* around 1962. For the 1963 Philips album on which it was the title tune, he put together a new sextet, with Art Farmer, Bob Brookmeyer, Jim Hall, Dave Bailey and me. But the group was too expensive for Gerry to keep together for club work. We went back to the quartet, with Brookmeyer.

Gerry and the actress Judy Holliday were a happy couple in those days, and the songs that he wrote then, like *Night Lights* and *Butterfly With Hiccups,* reflected that happiness. Judy had a flair for writinglyrics They worked on a musical version of Anita Loos's *Happy Birthday*. My wife and I spent an evening at Judy's house in Washingtonville where she sang all the songs, with Gerry at the piano. They were very excited about the project, but it fell apart when Loos lost interest in doing the necessary rewriting to turn the play into a musical. It never reached the stage.

Judy recorded some of the songs they wrote for *Happy Birthday* on a studio album with an augmented version of Gerry's big band. Judy was unhappy with her singing, and the release of the album was postponed until she could return to the studio to redo her work. But she died in 1965 without getting it done. In 1980 the original performances were finally released as *Holliday with Mulligan*, on the DRG label.

I left Gerry's quartet at the end of 1965 for some steady work in New York, and we never played together again, though we remained friendly. I followed his music with interest for the ensuing thirty years. When my first book, *Jazz Anecdotes*, was translated into Japanese in 1995, I got an offer to produce a CD for the Venus Records label in Japan. I put a quartet together, with Carmen Leggio, Joe Cohn and David Jones for a record date at Rudy Van Gelder's studio in Englewood, New Jersey. One of the tunes I chose for the date was Gerry's *Night Lights*. I liked the way it came out, and in the liner notes I dedicated it to Gerry.

When the first copies of the CD arrived at my home in January, 1996, I wanted to send one to Gerry. As I reached for the phone to call him and tell him about it, it rang. It was a friend giving me the sad news that Gerry had just passed away. I wish he could have heard the music. — B.C.