

Norm Nathan interview collection, 1950s-1970s

BCA-029

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

April 11, 2017

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Berklee Archives
2017/04/03
Berklee College of Music
1140 Boylston St
Boston, MA, 02215
617-747-8001

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Summary Information

Repository	Berklee Archives
Creator	Nathan, Norm
Title	Norm Nathan interview collection, 1950s-1970s
Date	1950s - 1970s
Extent	1.0 Cubic feet
Language	English

Preferred citation

[Identification of item], in the Norm Nathan interview collection, BCA-029. Berklee Archives, Stan Getz Library, Berklee College of Music.

Biographical note

For 52 years, Norm Nathan (1926-1996) was a disc jockey and talk show host on various Boston-area radio stations with a penchant for jazz. From 1957 - 1968 Nathan hosted "Sounds in the Night" on WHDH-AM and beginning in 1984 he hosted all-night talk show weekends on WBZ-AM. Programming included jazz performances as well as insightful interviews with musical legends such as Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and Sarah Vaughan.

Scope and contents

Selected audio interviews with notable jazz performers, collected from "Sounds in the night" hosted by Norm Nathan and broadcast on WHDH radio in Boston from the late 1950s into the 1970s.

Many of the interviews have been transferred to CDs and have individual catalog records; links to these catalog records have been placed beneath their corresponding reels in the finding aid.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically. When available, abstracts written by staff member Ralph Rosen and edited by student assistants Drew Houser and Andrew Schroeder have been made available in the finding aid.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Berklee Archives 2017/04/03

Access

This non-circulating collection is open for research use by appointment on site at the Berklee Archives (Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with evening hours available upon request). Advance notice is required to retrieve archival items because these materials are stored offsite. Use of audiovisual materials may require the production of listening or viewing copies. To schedule an appointment or request further information, please email archives@berklee.edu or call 617-747-8001.

Controlled Access Headings

Subject(s)

- Boston Jazz scene
- Jazz History
- Jazz musicians
- Nathan, Norm

Collection Inventory

	Box	Reel
Errol Garner (Part 1), 1958 March 11	1	1
Item Record		
https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23152?locg=2		
Scope and Contents note		
<p>Garner discusses his early engagements as a solo pianist in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and his first high-profile work in New York with Slam Stewart, as well as his first recording, "Laura." Garner lists some of his favorite musicians including Oscar Peterson and Bud Powell and talks about playing in New York on 52nd Street during the early days of bebop. He also expresses his desire to compose music for ballet and musicals.</p>		
Errol Garner (Part 2), 1958 March 11	1	2
Item Record		
https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23152?locg=2		
Horace Silver (Part 1), 1958 April 30	1	3
Item Record		
https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/34396?locg=2		
Scope and Contents note		

Silver reviews his early professional experience in New York including working as the house pianist at Birdland and playing with Art Blakey and Lester Young. He discusses his influences such as Bud Powell and Thelonius Monk, and he talks about his personal preference for small groups. He also mentions his interest in writing lyrics, his favorite vocalists, and the responsibilities of being a leader.

Bob Flanagan (Part 1), 1958 September 22	1	4
Bob Flanagan (Part 2), 1958 September 22	1	5
Dukes of Dixieland- Frank and Fred Assunto, ca. 1961 November	1	6

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23149?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Brothers Frank and Fred Assunto talk about their New Orleans upbringing, and how their hometown audience protested after they became internationally known. They talk of their busy performance schedule, their latest album, famous musician pranks, and the recording labels they've been on.

Ruby Braff, 1962	1	7
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Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23143?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

The highly opinionated Braff is asked about a number of prominent singers and players. He stresses the importance of standard songs as the best vehicles for expression and improvisation.

Earl "Fatha" Hines (Part 1), ca. 1964 Summer

1

8

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23155?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Hines discusses his own early classical training and how jazz players can benefit from a similar classical upbringing. He describes the first time he met Louis Armstrong, and he talks about the various groups he led over the years and his embracing of the bebop movement. Hines also describes his halcyon days in Chicago, how well he was treated by Al Capone, and how music should help people forget their troubles.

Earl "Fatha" Hines (Part 2), ca. 1964 Summer

1

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23155?locg=2>

Earl "Fatha" Hines (Part 3), ca. 1964 Summer

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Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23155?locg=2>

Jimmy Rushing/Stan Montero, 1965 October 01

1

11

Item Record

Jimmy Rushing: <https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23157?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

In a discussion contrasting rock with rhythm and blues, Rushing points out the differences in artists, song form, and instrumentation. He discusses his great respect towards singers such as Billie Holiday and his hesitations when it comes to covering these artists' songs.

Ethel Ennis (Part 1), 1965	1	12
Ethel Ennis (Part 2), 1965	1	13
Frank Foster, 1965	1	14

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23154?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Foster discusses his years with Count Basie and his own plans to do some original music with a 22-piece band for a different sound.

Jackie Paris, 1966	1	15
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Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23156?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Jackie Paris talks about his big hit “Skylark” which he had the opportunity to record twice. He talks about his busy schedule, his travels with his wife, Ann Marie Moss, and his preferences toward storytelling-singers such as Nat King Cole and Tony Bennett.

Roy Eldridge (Part 1), 1966 1 16

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23150?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Roy Eldridge mentions how to assimilate changes in style while maintaining identity. He mentions his first influences, Rex Stewart and Coleman Hawkins. He talks about arriving in New York in the early 1930's, his practice routine, first hearing Louis Armstrong, and his experience as a black artist traveling with the white bands of Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa.

Roy Eldridge (Part 2), 1966 1 17

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23150?locg=2>

Roy Eldridge (Part 3), 1966 1 18

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23150?locg=2>

Frank Derrone, 1966 1 19

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23147?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Derrone mentions the Newport Jazz Festival, Randall's Island Festival, Laugh-In, and high-profile appearances. The Providence, Rhode Island, native offers his opinions about Rock.

June Christy, 1966

1

20

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23145?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Christy talks about her moderate tour schedule and her home life, discusses her comparison to other vocalists who also sang with Stan Kenton, talks about her pre-Kenton experience with bands in Decatur, Illinois, and how the Kenton Band influenced her approach to singing.

Wild Bill Davison/Claude Hopkins/Arvel Shaw, 1968

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21

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23146?locg=2>

Charlie Byrd, 1970 June 04

1

22

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23144?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Guitarist Byrd talks about his being unfairly categorized as a “strictly jazz” musician. He discusses in great detail his latest project, composing for a musical. He also mentions his latest album.

Sgt. Johnny Desmond (Part 1), Undated

1

23

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23148?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Desmond discusses his experience as a vocalist for the Glenn Miller band. He describes the performance schedule and Miller’s leadership, and mentions how Miller produces his band’s unique sound. He then discusses his work in music theater.

Sgt. Johnny Desmond (Part 2),

1

24

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23148?locg=2>

Ray Charles/Ramsey Lewis, Undated

1

26

Item Record

Ray Charles: <https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23158?locg=2>

Ramsey Lewis: <https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23142?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Charles discusses The Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby," rhythm and blues on the radio, and politics.

Lewis discusses his latest release, "Maiden Voyage" and his soon-to-be-released album featuring his trio and a symphony orchestra. Lewis says that he only performs in a few select clubs, and he prefers concert hall venues.

Al Hibbler (Part 2), Undated

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26

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23153?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Hibbler talks about his biggest hit songs such as "Unchained Melody" and "11th Hour" and his time spent with Duke Ellington. He discusses recording for Frank Sinatra's label, Reprise, and he praises Sinatra for his artistic freedom. He feels that the current crop of singers can't sing blues like the older generation, with the exception of Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington and Kay Starr.

Tom Ewell, Undated

1

27

Phyllis Diller, Undated

1

28

Helen Forrest (Part 2), Undated

1

29

Item Record

<https://catalog.berklee.edu/eg/opac/record/23151?locg=2>

Scope and Contents note

Atlantic City, NJ, native Helen Forrest details her experience as a big band vocalist with Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman and Harry James. She discusses her method of singing with Harry James, and gives insight to traveling with these bands.