

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Hello, I'm Rob Hochschild, Associate Professor of Liberal Arts, for the Berklee Oral History Project. Today it is particularly cool to be with our guest, Berklee's Vice President for Special Programs, Rob Rose. I've known Rob ever since I started working at Berklee in the early nineties and have had the pleasure of witnessing his many accomplishments over the years, accomplishments that Berklee President Roger Brown recently called a "stunning body of work," and I would agree with that assessment. Rob arrived on the Berklee campus in 1967 as a student, joined the faculty in 1972, chair of Performance Studies in '83, and Vice President in '93.

One of the things that is so often said about Rob, whether people are referring to his innovations in curriculum and programs or the concerts he produces, is that he's always placed students first in everything he's done. Rob retires from Berklee next week, March 16th, 2018, and we're very fortunate to get this time with him today. Rob Rose, thank you so much for being here.

**ROB ROSE:** Well, great to see you, and thanks for having me.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Yeah, you as well. So let's just start at the beginning and work our way through. If only we had--we probably need about ten hours for this, but we'll try to get it done in about ninety minutes.

**ROB ROSE:** We'll do the compact version.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Exactly. So you grew up nearby.

**ROB ROSE:** In Hopedale, a town called Hopedale.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Hopedale, Mass.

**ROB ROSE:** In those days, it was about 2,500 people in the town. There was thirty-five, maybe forty people in my graduating class in high school. Very tiny. We were the only ones. It was 101 before, and 101 after; for some reason ours was very small. In Milford, which is the next town, there was a saxophone teacher; his name is Boots Mussulli.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Great name.

**ROB ROSE:** Boots played with Stan Kenton, who was a very well-known--played with Herb Pomeroy, he's in the famous Herb Pomeroy albums and stuff like that. And he was my saxophone teacher, he was like my second father. So my two most important teachers in my life at that time, was my grammar school music teacher, Ella Green Reed, and her piano teacher--when she was in Europe, studying, when she was in school, actually had studied with Brahms.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Oh, wow.

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, so she goes back a long way. And then Boots was best friends with all the main jazz people and stuff like that. So when I was twelve years old, he was also managing a club that was in Milford, so he would take me to see the sound check with Count Basie and Duke Ellington and all these kind of things, you know. So I got this unbelievable experience that you just can't get.

**ROB** And you were playing tenor at that time?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I'm a tenor saxophone player, yeah. A quick story about the first time I met a star was Basie, and Basie was one of my heroes. So the room was called the Crystal Room, so Boots brings me over there. He and I are the only ones in the room. All of a sudden, Basie shows up. He walks in the room and I'm flabbergasted. "Count, Count, Count, can I have your autograph?!" He goes, "Let me get some air, kid, okay?" [Both laugh] So that taught me a big lesson right there, like let him come into the place, relax a little bit, and then maybe he'll talk to you. So it was a good experience.

**ROB** And you also met Duke Ellington at that time, and that was a more--you had more of an interaction with him?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, that was--my father was a caterer, and one of the places that he was catering used to bring in big bands and stuff like that, so Woody Herman and all those people would play there. So one day, Duke's band's playing there, and in the afternoon Duke shows up in the station wagon with all the band's stuff. So my father says, "Well, go help him," because he knew I was a big Duke Ellington fan. So my wife now, who was my girlfriend then--we were fifteen years old--we helped Duke bring all his stuff in and spent the afternoon helping set the band up and stuff like that. So it was an amazingHow he put up with two fifteen-year-old kids, I have no idea, but he was a very sweet guy.

**ROB** So did you pick up anything just from being around him that day?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, yeah. The story really is that if you watch them play a set, if you had an opportunity to actually see that, the way the set would start would be that Duke would walk out, play the piano.

Then the bass player would show up, and then the drummer. Then it was guitar and stuff like that, and then a couple of horn players would show up about forty-five minutes into the set. And about an hour into the set, the whole band's onstage. They play, they finish the set in an hour and a half, take a break. Second set, Duke comes back, plays the piano and you just reverse it. And what I realized the whole night, nobody turned one page of music.

**ROB** Wow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No music. They just played it.

**ROB** Knew it cold.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, it was unbelievable. Unbelievable experience.

**ROB** So I would imagine that that's something you've thought back to over the years as you've done other things at

**HOCHSCHILD:** Berklee?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, Duke being this unbelievable musician, arranger, piano player, he was a real show person. He was unbelievable with the audience. When the band was playing--after he got through his solo piano, playing the trio stuff--when the band started playing, Duke would get up off the piano and he'd just stand in front and smile at everybody, get everybody going. So yeah, you have to combine great music with some showbiz.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Yeah, definitely. So your brothers were also musicians? You played music with your brothers at that time?

**ROB ROSE:** I have three brothers. My mother was a self-taught person. She could play anything. She had no musical training. She played the piano, she played steel guitar. She could play my shoelaces and make 'em sound good. [Rob laughs] And so she wanted all of us to take music lessons. So my older brother's a drummer, the brother who's a year younger than me, his name is Steve--the older brother's name is Don. Steve, if you read the Aerosmith books, Joe Perry is the one who credits my brother Steve as the one teaching him how to play the guitar.

**ROB** Oh, no kidding.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** We lived in the same town--Joe grew up in Hopedale where we did, and so they became really good friends. They're still good friends to this day and stuff. Then our youngest brother Dave is a bass player. So we had the Rose family band, of course.

**ROB** Yeah. And what were you playing? What kind of music? Original, covers?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** We were playing anything. If you were paying, we were playing. [Both laugh]

**ROB** It's a good philosophy.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Exactly. My father's philosophy, by the way.

**ROB** Oh, is that right?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah. He said, "So what are you gonna do?" he said, "I'm gonna put all this money in, and you're gonna not make any money? The only way you're going to make any money is if you play something that somebody wants to hear!"

**ROB** And you were the saxophone player in that band?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I was the saxophone player.

**ROB** Okay. So I know that before you came to Berklee you were obsessed with the Beatles and with George Martin.

**HOCHSCHILD:** Was there a moment, like so many other people, where you heard the Beatles and everything changed for you?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, you know I was a huge Charlie Parker fan. Just huge. My saxophone teacher--I never had a book. He would write all my saxophone lessons. So I would bring a record, I'd bring like the genius Charlie Parker Volume 1 Strings. And he said, "What do you want to do?" I said, "I want to do this." And he would just write out the solo. And he was so brilliant that--I had the Koko solo, for instance, when I was eleven and he would write it out. And then I'd do the Koko solo when I was fifteen and he would write that out. Then when I was eighteen, he'd write that out. And if you look at them, they're all very different, but they all sound the same. And the one that when I was eleven, an eleven-year-old kid could play, when I'm fifteen, a fifteen-year-old kid could play it, and then you could play it when you were eighteen.

**ROB** That's somebody who understood music education right there.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** He was unbelievable. It was just amazing. We had a thing called the Milford Area Youth Orchestra. So people like Bobby Tamagni, who teaches here, came out of that orchestra; Tony Lada, a great trombone player who taught here, he came out of that orchestra. John Durith, who was a trumpet player, a composer, arranger guy, was Mel Tormé's music director for years and stuff like that. So a lot of great people came out of that orchestra too.

**ROB** So you were heavily into Charlie Parker and other jazz, but then also music like--

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I met my wife. I was fifteen. My saxophone teacher couldn't stand this, really. "Now he's got a girlfriend!" [Both laugh] And she was really into country music at the time, into rock music. My brother Steve, who was the guitar player, we started to have a little bit of a rock band. And so when that started, it sort of changed the thing for me a little bit more, so I became more and more leaning towards the rock thing. And of course, the Beatles came out at the same time. And you know, with Kennedy having been shot, everybody was depressed. It was a terrible time, and these four guys come out and they're funny. And the music was different. It was just a different thing, you know. I remember falling asleep to the Meet The Beatles! album with "This Boy" and all those kind of things on it. The harmony on that was just killing in those days. So how do you do that? Of course, we wanted to be in a recording studio, and George Martin was the guy that was getting in the recording studio, so

**ROB** Well, George Martin was on campus for a degree at some point. Did you meet him when he was here?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Oh, yeah, we did in 1988. It was actually my fortieth birthday. Commencement is always on my birthday. [Both laugh] I could do all my birthdays through commencement.

**ROB** Second Saturday in May, every year.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah. It's that kind of thing, right? So he got his honorary degree that year with Dizzy Gillespie. And Dizzy was incredible too. So I met him then, and then a few years later in the nineties, late nineties, he was doing The Making of Sgt. Pepper, and he was doing a tour. So it was him, and his son Giles was the guy doing the sound for him, and stuff like that. And he did it here, at the Performance Center. So I get to spend the afternoon talking to him, getting him set up, and all that kind of stuff. That was an amazing time. When he was here as the honorary doctorate, Lee Berk, the President at the time, 'cause it was my birthday before that, he had a little birthday party for me, and George came to it. So that was kind of a cool thing.

**ROB** Yeah, George Martin came to my birthday party, that's a pretty good highlight.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, it was a nice deal. He was a very sweet guy, and unbelievably talented.

**ROB** That's great. So being around him those times, did you glean anything about the business from being around

**HOCHSCHILD:** him, or was it just sort of soaking up his, you know, his whole life?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, I wanted to know the thought process, really. Being a producer isn't so much telling people what to do, it's controlling what they're doing, and let them do what they do, and try to get the best out of them, and stuff like that. So one of the things he told me that is an interesting fact, really, is that with the Beatles, he did very little work with them actually in the studio. He would only go down there if they asked him to go down there. And they would ask him, for instance, like if they're doing "Strawberry Fields" someone would say, "We want to do something different." And they would talk about a lot, then he would try to come up with how they're going to do it differently, and stuff like that. But the vocals--this is the thing that kills me. The vocal parts, he said, are all them. He said he had very little input into the vocal stuff. And he said McCartney did the background lines for things like, you know, "Help," great background line vocals and stuff. So it was really those guys putting those vocals together, and that just blew me away.

**ROB** They just instinctively knew what to do.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Three of them around one microphone.

**ROB** Yeah. Amazing, amazing.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It gives you chills even thinking about it! Nobody would do it that way today. And they're touring six months of the year, they're writing all the music, and they're releasing singles that aren't on the albums!

**ROB** Right.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** But people don't get that.

**ROB** I know. And two or three albums every year, back in those days.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, just unbelievable.

**ROB** Yeah, it's pretty insane. So we just kind of jumped ahead a little bit, but let's go back to when you first arrived on

**HOCHSCHILD:** campus. This was fifty-one years ago, in 1967. I'm sure things haven't changed much around here.

**ROB ROSE:** Not at all.

**ROB** Not at all. So what do you remember about those first few weeks or months being around campus?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, what was interesting was that my brother and I, in our rock band, it was called Ford Theater and we were playing in a place illegally, I guess, across the street from Fenway Park, called the Brown Derby. I really wasn't sure about going into college at all, because we had a rock band we were playing, and you know, we could have a record deal, and all this other stuff, so "I want to be a rockstar" kind of thing. And that didn't work out real quick because of the managers. We came in one night, all the equipment was gone, everything else, to pay the bills, took all the money. Now I'm at Berklee, walk into Berklee, and the first teacher I have is Phil Wilson. Great trombone player, great arranger, composer, just the best. Plays piano, he's a great drummer, he's a great piano player and everything, he's played with everybody: Woody Herman, Jimmy Dorsey, all those guys. Buddy Rich. Matter of fact, he had the hit in that day on Mercy, Mercy that he wrote, which is the number one record in the country with a big band. I mean, nobody did that, right? So Phil is playing at a club that Tony Randall--no, not Tony Randall Tony...I'll come back, I'll remember his name. Anyway, and I said, "Did you guys get paid?" He said, "Of course we got paid, kid." So we go, "Ohhhh no," because it was our manager who was running that club. It was his club. So they end up not getting paid. So that was my first sort of intertwining with the business, Berklee and stuff like that.

**ROB** Welcome to the business, yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Welcome to the business. I didn't get paid, you didn't get paid, so now we're friends! [Both laugh]

**ROB** So as a student, what did the place seem like when you first got here, just soaking it up?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It was really scary, 'cause you were in a class with Phil Wilson. I have a jazz quartet with Charlie Mariano, one of the world's greatest saxophone players. And Charlie says, "We're gonna do 'Embraceable You.'" So Charlie will play for fifteen minutes: "Okay, you, kid." I'm not gonna play after hearing you, are you kidding me? I want to throw my saxophone away. [Rob H laughs] It was really intimidating because it was a lot less people and very heavy--you know, so you'd have a class with Herb Pomeroy, Phil Wilson, Charlie Mariano, there were some really great players in those days. Just great players. George Mraz was in that class.

**ROB** Oh, as a student?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah. Larry Bethune was in that class. Bill Pierce was in that class, Larry Baione. There was a whole bunch of us in that same class that went on to work at Berklee. Took it over.

**ROB** That's right, that's right, and here you are, leaving it to the next generation in another week or so. So what were  
**HOCHSCHILD:** the big things educationally, experientially, that you got out of being at Berklee during those student years?

**ROB ROSE:** I think it was the intensity of what you needed to know to be able to be a really good musician. It wasn't so much the knowledge, because you know, after having studied with Boots--and the sad story here, the ending of Boots, is this: in 1967, the Youth Orchestra was going to play the Newport Jazz Festival, which we did. And Boots was going to start teaching here that September. Ended up with cancer and died. Really traumatic for me. So coming into Berklee at the very beginning was really hard because I thought my teacher was going to be there, but he wasn't, and I hadn't really lost anybody to that point. So that was really a difficult time. But the dedication of being a musician, and seeing the stuff that Herb and Phil and Charlie and all them sort of knew instinctively, it's not like getting it out of a book. Boots never used a book. It was always ears, and you gotta get it in the heart and you don't think about it.

So being able to go through the whole college, and we will get to those things--I was a Composition major, I wanted to write. Which you can't write if you're thinking about rules all the time, you have to just be able to write. And that's why Mozart, when you think about it, there's no pads there, he just wrote stuff. It was unbelievable. And then Beethoven had all these pads where he would just keep working it, working it and working, working it. My grammar school teacher said, with Beethoven, "You can never change a note. You can't improve what he already wrote." And she was right because if you try doing it, it's never the same. It's always quite different, and stuff like that. So I think that was it. It was like, if you love this stuff, you have to dedicate yourself and you have to internalize it all. You have to become a musician, you have to be a musician. That's what a musician is.

**ROB** So you came out of it having a greater understanding of how to pull that off, how to really take everything  
**HOCHSCHILD:** internally and be a pro at that point.

**ROB ROSE:** I didn't really know it until I started teaching here for John LaPorta. That was my education.

**ROB** So let me ask you something before you get to LaPorta, 'cause I--  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, yeah, I just want to tag on it, 'cause it really started, was that.

**ROB** Yeah, and I definitely want to ask you about the great John LaPorta. I'm just wondering also what the scene in  
**HOCHSCHILD:** Boston was like, the music scene. Either for students, or faculty, or people in general

**ROB ROSE:** It was killer. It was beautiful because we had the rock band. There was a place called the Boston Tea Party, we would be playing there.

**ROB** Lansdowne Street at the time.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Over on, no, down the street

**ROB** Was it Newbury, or?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No, it was off of Huntington Ave. It was down in that area. Chuck Berry would be playing there, we'd be the opening act and stuff. It was just incredible. And then you had like the Psychedelic Supermarket, which is over across where BU is, on Commonwealth Ave, and stuff like that.

**ROB** That was a club also?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** That was a club, yeah, great club. So there was the "Bosstown Sound," the Beacon Street Union, and all those kind of groups came out of that area, so there was a lot of action here. Plus you had Paul's Mall, the Jazz Workshop. We played a place called Unicorn Coffeehouse which was another underground place on Newbury Street, just past--matter of fact, Fred Taylor, who owned the Workshop and Paul's Mall, owned the... sorry, I'm dropping, my brain's not working

**ROB** That's alright.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Unicorn Coffeehouse!

**ROB** Okay.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The reason I lost it is because Rex Trailer, who was a TV kids' guy in those days, he was a cowboy that played songs and stuff like that. He was part-owner in the Unicorn Coffeehouse.

The reason I'm telling you this is because Simon and Garfunkel, all those sixties folk acts, would play at the Unicorn Coffeehouse, pretty much just before they broke. So they'd play there one week, and then the week after, all of a sudden they're national acts. It was unbelievable.

**ROB** So you'd see them at that place?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah! Well, we would play--we'd be there on Monday night, they'd be there on Thursday night.

**ROB** Amazing.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It was incredible. And in Paul's Mall, Workshop, you know, the music scene was really great here.

**ROB** One other legendary story from those days that I've been hearing a lot about is the fact that Van Morrison wrote  
**HOCHSCHILD:** and gigged around town in 1968, he was working on Astral Weeks. Did you ever hear rumblings of him around here?

**ROB ROSE:** I never ran into him, but I heard the stories though. I heard the stories.

**ROB** So let's go to -

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** 'Cause you know, Aerosmith, all those, it was all here.

**ROB** Yeah, it must have been an amazing time in Boston.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It was a really cool period.



**ROB** So you graduated and started writing jingles and doing some other work? What were you doing?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I had no intention of ever teaching. I wanted to be in the studio. I had been on the road when I was in high school, and now my wife, my girlfriend--we're going to get married and she doesn't want me on the road. So the way you do that is to stay in the studios, is you go and start writing jingles and things like that. Whatever you can do to stay in the studio. So I was doing that, I was teaching private lessons and things like that. And a friend of mine named Jim Howard, who I met at Berklee, calls one day. He says, "Hey, look at this, there's a teacher leaving and it's only October, and we need somebody for a couple of months. You want to come in and do that?" He used to produce MusicFest Canada and stuff like that. So I said, "Yeah, I'll come in." So I had an interview with John LaPorta, and he hired me. And I never left.

**ROB** So did you study under John when you were a student?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No.

**ROB** Okay.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No, I studied under John when I started teaching for him. [Laughs]

**ROB** But you knew about John.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Oh, yeah.

**ROB** So just tell us a little bit about what you knew about John, because maybe not everybody knows his history.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, when I was going to Berklee, one of these kids I went to high school with actually came to Berklee too, and he was in John's area. I was in the Writing Division. He was in the Performance Division.

**ROB** Gotcha.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** John was an extremely well-known jazz clarinet player, alto player, saxophone player, composer. I mean, it's true--when Stravinsky wrote the Ebony Concerto for Woody Herman, they had John play it. John was the guy that he actually wrote it for, it was just--he was an amazing, amazing musician. Ears, best ears I've ever heard of anybody having, is John. And Herb had amazing ears too, by the way.

**ROB** And John LaPorta played with Charlie Parker, among other people.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** He played with Charlie Parker, there's records of that. He was also with Charlie Mingus, you know, he had his own groups and stuff like that. I produced a couple of CDs with him later on and stuff. They were really nice CDs, with Rick Peckham playing guitar and stuff. He was with Woody Herman's band.

**ROB** So he was sort of your teaching mentor in those early days?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yup.

**ROB** How did that work? He went into your classroom, watched you do your thing, gave you some feedback?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, John had an interesting way. He was hardcore. It was either right or it wasn't right. And you weren't going to teach the students if it wasn't right, you know, it was that kind of thing. So we would actually have teacher meetings where there would be twenty-five teachers in a room on a Thursday at one o'clock having lunch, and John would go around and ask: "Okay, you do this." He sort of talked like that. "You do this. What are you doing in your class? Sing me something." You'd do something, and if you made a mistake, he'd just waste you on the spot. He'd just, "What are you doing?! You can't do it that way!" So you learn how to be prepared really, really well. He'd come into your class. I used to teach the Ear Training lectures in those days. We'd have like 200 people in an Ear Training class, in a lecture, and then they would go off into individual classes after the lecture. I was the guy doing the lectures. So John would come in [laughs] If you made a mistake in front of 200 people, it didn't matter, you know. It was right downstairs, where the library is now. There used to be a concert hall there that could hold maybe 200 or 300 people with a stage in it and stuff like that, and it's where we used to do all the lectures and things, was there and yeah, Mingus was there, Cannonball Adderly was in that room.

**ROB** Oh, I've seen those pictures. Okay. So John would call you out in the middle of a lecture in front of 200 people?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Oh, absolutely, absolutely: "What are you doing!? That's wrong!" So he kept on your toes really, really well. You really had to stay on top of it, you had to really have your best game going all the time. He was such a great musician that you wanted to make sure you were pleasing him, because his whole heart was for the students. It was all about the student. Larry Berk, same thing. It was about the student. And the students are the most important thing, because if you have great teachers, then the students can learn and get the things they need to have so they can go out and make their lives and stuff like that. That's what it's really about, right?

**ROB** Absolutely. So I just read this in a recent concert program, that when you first saw the Berklee Performance Center around that time, the word you chose to describe it was, I believe, a "shambles." I wonder if you could say more about that room then and now, because you've spent a lot of time in that room over the years.

**ROB ROSE:** It's almost like my living room.

**ROB** [Laughs] Exactly, exactly.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Larry Berk, who was the founder of the college and the first president, brought me in the stage door in like 1973. He said, "This is where we're going to have all of our concerts." The walls were all brick, there were holes in the ceiling, you could see through the ceiling. Aerosmith actually used to rehearse there. That was their rehearsal hall in, like, 1970.

**ROB** Oh wow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** A lot of rock bands used actually to rehearse there. In fact, the Van Morrison thing may have actually happened in there a little bit, because a lot of rock bands would use that place after it was not a theater anymore, and use that as a rehearsal spot. So he said, "This is we're going to do all of our concerts," because we used to do them in the New England Life Hall and different places and things because there was no real concert place on the campus. So in 1976 in April, Larry Monroe and Ted Pease and Tony Teixeira got a grant from the government, it was the centennial, to do a history of jazz. So they put together a history of jazz group and they presented a really cool version of the history of jazz with a band, and stuff like that. And that's what opened it, in April of 1976, and then I started doing concerts in there in the Fall of '76 until now, until last week.

**ROB** So '76, that's when you really began producing student concerts?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No, I was doing concerts in '73, but I was doing them in New England Life Hall and these other places.

**ROB** And where was New England Life Hall, remind us about that?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Just down the street, across from John Hancock. The Dorothy Quincy Suite.

**ROB** Not far from campus.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, not far. We did all of the big Berklee things over there. And I think the reason Larry Berk was bringing me in is 'cause I was doing concerts and he liked what I was doing, and he wanted to show me, "Well, this is the future."

**ROB** So if you think back to then, and you've probably done thousands of concerts--I mean, Berklee puts on hundreds  
**HOCHSCHILD:** of shows every year, so there must be

**ROB ROSE:** Right now we're doing almost 2600 events a year.

**ROB** Wow, okay.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It's mind-boggling. Mind-boggling.

**ROB** Yeah, it really is. So, I wonder what you can say about what you've learned, because you've done so much of  
**HOCHSCHILD:** this, makes for a good show, a good presentation of music, a good event. How do you work with students in terms of rehearsals? What kind of instructions do you give them? How do you make so many of these shows succeed?

**ROB ROSE:** That's a tough one. I always did what I would call theme concerts. So in those days I had a thing called the Berklee Jazz/Rock Ensemble. I wanted to call it the Berklee Rock Ensemble, but the college didn't really want to do it, 'cause they didn't really want to get into the rock thing in those days. So they said, "We'll put the word "jazz" in it." So we called it the Jazz/Rock Ensemble, but Jeff, Jeff Wake--Jeff Tain--came from there. Tommy Campbell, yeah, Jeff Watts came from there, Tain Watts, right?

**ROB** Yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Tommy Campbell played in that, Kevin Eubanks played in that group, Walter Beasley, a whole bunch of people came through that group.

**ROB** A lot of talent.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And what I found was that--so we would do the music of Motown, and we would do the music of this, and stuff like that. I remember when we did the first "rock" concert, it was a Beatle[s] concert, second half was a Beatle[s] concert. And the places went nuts. I also found that the jazz players, the really good jazz players, didn't mind doing that. They liked playing that stuff. So I would do a little bit of jazzy, more hip things, and then I'd slide in the rock stuff. It was really doing themed things, right? So once you have Makoto playing in your band and some things like that, and you're attracting all the good players, you get the better singers and you get the better writers, and stuff like that. So it's trying to have the top of the line that you can, coming into your classes and stuff like that, was really important.

I would try to pick things that I thought were pertinent to whatever the day was. To get it started, you had to do some things that were maybe a little older than you might want to have had to. But nobody was doing the music of Motown in 1978, so we would do that. Nobody was doing Beatle[s] concerts, they were doing something else and stuff, andoh, no, I'm not sure, maybe I did one little disco-y thing, not much. Disco wasn't sort of my cup of tea. It was actually easy to rehearse in those days. So what people would do is they would actually sign up for your ensemble and so you have twenty-five people in your ensemble, and that would be the Jazz/Rock Ensemble and stuff like that. That became very successful. They used to pack the place with the Jazz/Rock Ensemble. And then Larry Monroe, who was a division dean--and I was also writing classes, I probably should tell you. I started things like Rock Arranging for the Recording Studio, and then I would do Harmonic Analysis of Rock Music. So I started putting on--you know, I did like the Improvisation on Latin Jazz Idiom, Improvisation on Blues Idiom. I started putting on this [unknown] and I started to have other teachers teach for me because I couldn't do all the classes. I'd have like twenty sections of Rock Arranging for the Recording Studio. Enter Ken Zambello, a guy who I worked with for years. So Ken would start teaching that class for me. Because I just couldn't take any more people in the class. In 1983, Larry Monroe, who was a division dean, knew I was getting very busy and he said, you know, "We really should do something, like, for singers," because we were getting more singers there.

**ROB** Right. We didn't even have a vocal department.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I don't even think the Vocal department was actually a department at that point. So we invented Singers Showcase, which started in 1983 and is continuing; the concert's in a month and a half from now, I think April 12th. I won't be here for that one. My first one, the first one I'll miss.

**ROB** Can't even imagine that.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, me either, you know. But it gets carried on. And we give those themes, like we did Bruno Mars a couple years ago. We did Sgt. Pepper this last year because it was the fifteenth anniversary of Sgt. Pepper, and stuff like that.

**ROB** Yeah, the Singers Showcase concerts are huge and I know the community comes out for a lot of those shows.  
**HOCHSCHILD:** They're really big, important concerts. They give students these opportunities to perform on the big stage in front of large audiences. And a lot of great students have left here and gone on and had really great careers, and talk about these concerts and the work with you and your team--the Yo Team--as really being important in developing their ability to do that kind of work.

**ROB ROSE:** The idea was to put the best students--so the singers would audition, and what we actually thought that the big thing was, was putting the singers through an audition process they would get on the outside. We thought that was the big deal. We didn't think so much about the show. So it would be really a great education to learn how to audition, because auditions aren't easy, right? So we take the best singers we could get, the best band, with the best arrangers, and then we put really good lights with it, the best sounds, and spend an extra day in there soundchecking and stuff like that, and give them a really great experience. And that became the frosting on the cake. So people like Lalah Hathaway, Susan Tedeschi, Esperanza Spalding--a lot of them came through Singers Showcase and stuff. The players too--John Blackwell, the drummer. A lot of great players came through as well.

**ROB** So that experience of the auditioning thing brings me to something I wanted to ask you about. You really helped  
**HOCHSCHILD:** create this environment where students are being tested in ways that are really going to help them prepare for what's coming later on. Students to this very day--it's a big deal going to your Singers Showcase audition. I teach now, students will come, like, "Oh, I have to miss class because I just got my audition time," or, "The auditions are at this time," and, you know, you don't want to stand in the way of somebody's opportunity to try out, because that's so critical.

**ROB ROSE:** Well, it's nice of you to let that happen. Some teachers won't let that happen. And it's really too bad that the two things have to butt.

**ROB** They still have to do their work, but you know, that's a priority.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, yeah, I understand, it's nice that you would let them do that. So thanks for that, because, well, it shows that you care. I appreciate that.

**ROB** That's why they're here.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Absolutely. So yeah, that's an amazing experience. Those things lead into things like the Great American Songbook, which we just did with the music of Paul Simon. Again, another theme. So we've done Duke Ellington and George Gershwin over the years, and we did the music of Disney and stuff like that, and we get a lot of people from the community to those shows. So we'll sell, you know, 1,200 tickets, and out of the 1,200, there might be 500 people from the community.

**ROB** So you mentioned a few of the names of singers who have been in Singers Showcase. Did you ever watch  
**HOCHSCHILD:** somebody who had a really hard time auditioning, and then over time they got better at it, just being exposed to the pressure?

**ROB ROSE:** Absolutely. There was--I won't give you any names, but there's actually a person this semester who had auditioned six times, and she was just a big feature in the Great American Songbook. And she tried and tried and tried and tried, 'cause we videotape those, we want you to come in--even if you get in, we want to sit down with you with the video and see why you did good, some things you can improve. If you didn't get in, these are things you could do to improve, so that's where the education part of that comes in. So we've had people try and try and try, and get in. And the other thing is that sometimes you get in the first time, and you don't get in for another three semesters because you don't audition very well, 'cause you might think you're a hotshot at that point.

RH Say it again?

**ROB ROSE:** You might think you're a hotshot.

**ROB** Oh, a hotshot, yeah.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You know, so "I got in once so I can just get in." That's not the way it works. Whoever does the best auditions, that's who gets in.

**ROB** You gotta show up every time and do your best.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You gotta show up every time and it doesn't matter if there's one person or if there's fifty thousand there, it's the same bit.

**ROB** So as far as really commanding the stage in a big room like that--you mentioned hundreds of people from the  
**HOCHSCHILD:** community come, and it's a 1,200 seat hall--what are the qualities that a performer on a stage like that has to bring to really make it work?

**ROB ROSE:** It's funny. This last concert, it was really, really really good. The orchestra was just

**ROB** The Paul Simon one?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Paul Simon one, yeah. It was a great orchestra, really great singers and stuff like that.

It was interesting, a couple of them froze. Because when you walk out in front of a thousand people, it's different than having Rob sitting in the audience, saying, "What are you doing?" It's a whole different bit. And I'm talking some seasoned people froze. And the reason they froze is we were on their case for a couple of days there, because they didn't quite know this. They thought they knew it, but they didn't really know the stuff the way they should know the stuff. They didn't internalize it enough. And so you get out there, and now the audience is reacting to you differently than you thought they might. That throws you off, so unless you know how to adjust, you can get caught into a bad scene. So nobody really knew it except us. But they knew it, too, and so that was a big learning lesson. Always come with your A game. I tell the jazz players, "Bring your solos. You play a great solo at the rehearsal, I want that same solo. Bring that solo. That's a great solo."

**ROB** So that's a message to them to make sure that they prepare enough on a piece that worked in rehearsal, to make  
**HOCHSCHILD:** sure it works on stage?

**ROB ROSE:** I'm always on the band, I'm on everybody, saying, "I don't know anybody reading music.

I'm gonna take away all the music stands." I'm not gonna do that, of course, but I tell them I'm gonna take them away. "You gotta have memorized this stuff." Because how are you gonna suddenly just really play great if you're reading the stuff, if you're really reading? You can't really do that.

**ROB** An aspect of the evolution you've been referring to, actually in this whole conversation, is the way Berklee had  
**HOCHSCHILD:** been established as a jazz school in so many ways and then went through this transition, really very much during those years that you were becoming more and more of an important part of the faculty--the seventies, the eighties, and rock and R&B and all these other forms of music were coming in. Was there a resistance? You sort of alluded to this, but how much of a resistance was there to these changes, and how did you sort of help it happen and still keep everything in balance?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, you know what's interesting is that when you--when they say the word "jazz," jazz was the pop music of the time. So all I was doing is putting the pop music of the time. That's the way I saw it, it wasn't like jazz is great, I love jazz. I'm a huge jazz fan. I'm a jazz player. And the place started 'cause it was the pop music of the time, right? But there was a resistance because, coming out of the fifties where everything was just a couple of chords, there was a couple of really great acts--you know, Elvis could really sing, a lot of people couldn't sing, you know the Motown records were great. So to get that involved with people who were really into the "jazz" thing was really sort of difficult. And what I would do is I would integrate some of the more well-known jazz faculty. Remember I told you, with some of the Jazz/Rock concerts they'd do a little jazz in the beginning, then the rock they'd do second. So I'd bring the jazz faculty and sort of showcase them playing jazz stuff, and then I'd do some pop stuff in the second half. So I was getting the best of both worlds, and things like that. And they realize, "Yeah, it's a pretty good band," you know. I remember one time the Jazz/Rock Ensemble, Buddy fired his band, Buddy Rich, and the next day the brass section and the saxophone section were in Buddy's band. [Rob H laughs] I lost the whole band basically.

**ROB** So then you had to get new people playing?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, yeah, I had to get new people, but they were around, 'cause there were trumpet players and trombone players around.

**ROB** That's a great story. So that versatility is such a part of what Berklee is and what Berklee teaches these days,  
**HOCHSCHILD:** and it really seemed to expand during those years. So you and your faculty had to really be ready to address all these different forms of music.

**ROB ROSE:** Well I was always interested in trying to--so I would hire people that would work for me. I remember when Larry would say, "Who do you want," I said, "Well, let's bring Ken Zambello in." So there was a student here who graduated, name is Nancy Marshall. She teaches here now. She became one of the first members of the original Yo Team. And then, you know, there was the Ensemble chair, we're both teachers, but Larry made Orville Wright the Ensemble chair, and I became the Performance Studies chair. Orville was on the Yo Team as well, and he was a writer, piano player guy, and he knew how to work with singers and things. So we're working with singers. The Singers Showcases would always do rock, jazz, pop, whatever it was, whatever the student wanted to do is what we would sort of do, and sort of guide it, and then once in a while we would put a theme with Singers Showcase and things. So even with the summer programs, we can talk about those in a little while I suppose, right?

**ROB** I was just gonna ask, yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The way I would hire people would be by what they did. So if I needed a pop vocal teacher, I would hire a person who did pop vocal stuff. If I needed a rock guitar player, I hired a rock teacher, kind of stuff. And all of a sudden, they've started--they're getting hired more by the College, and so a lot of people, Kevin Barry, Bob Stanton, a lot of these "rock" people sort of came through that way.

**ROB** It's great, and all those folks have done amazing work here and outside the college.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And outside. Absolutely, absolutely.

**ROB** So you just mentioned summer programs, I was just gonna get to that. As the VP of Special Programs, you took  
**HOCHSCHILD:** that over, or really started it in the way that it is now, in 1986, I believe, is that right? So how did that all start, and what was the vision then? How did it change over time?

**ROB ROSE:** It's really interesting. I'm gonna back up just a little bit real quick. My older brother--in the early sixties, Berklee had a seven week program, they had a summer program, and he went to it. So we were--you know, we come from this little tiny Mayberry kind of town, right? And he goes back, and he says, "You gotta go there," he says, "The teachers are smoking cigarettes!" [Both laugh] He said, "It was so cool!" Knowing at the time--when I was twelve, I knew I wanted to be a musician. Never changed. So that's it. So I gotta go there. So I never went to a summer program, I just went right to Berklee, but I had all these great experiences before I came to Berklee.

In 1986, Lee Berk had called me into his office and saidThey'd tried to change from the seven-week to something else the year before, and it was a lot of commotion, a lot ofHe says, "I want to have a quiet year. I want you to take this and I want it to be quiet." He didn't want any noise, right? [Rob H laughs] People, like, complaining about stuff. Well, it was a five-week program, so Bob Doezema and Bob Myers--I'm forgetting some names--but Bob Myers, who was Associate Dean of Curriculum in those days, had started, they went from the seven to the five-week the year before, in '85. And it was a lot of commotion and stuff like that. So Bob was withdrawing himself from it because he was busy doing what he was doing, and so it was Bob Doezema, myself, and Dave Weigert. And I'm taking it over.



So John LaPorta--going back to John--John loved teaching students. So this is an opportunity now that all of us could create something from scratch, of how to try to what do students really want? My high school education in music was awful. My grammar school teacher was great. The high school thing was terrible. Except for my saxophone teacher, but that wasn't high school, it was outside of high school, right? Ken Doezema had the same thing, he was a guitar player, he was a rock guy and stuff, great jazz player--he didn't like his high school thing. So, let's do what we really would like to have done if we were in high school.

And so the philosophy, John's philosophy, was always to do it first and talk about it later. Always do it first. Get them to do something first, and then tell them what they just did, never the other way around. And that's what we based the whole thing, is that it's done that way. Even the auditioning, the testing and placement stuff, is to find out what you know as a student, and we're gonna start you right there. Not what you don't know. A lot of tests find out, they say, "Well, you don't know this." We never say that to somebody because it makes you feel like you are not adequate or something like that, if somebody says, "You don't know anything." Never that. That's what you know, great, we're gonna start you right there, doesn't matter what level you are. So in Five-Week, for instance, you can come in, and here's a whole note, and it gets four beats in this kind of time signature; or you're taking Harmony 5, basically, and transcribing Coltrane solos and solfège-ing them. It's pretty expansive stuff.

**ROB** Room for everybody in that situation.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** There's room for everybody in that thing. When I first started it, the Berklee teachers weren't so much interested in teaching it, 'cause we were--

**ROB** 'Cause the students were fifteen, sixteen, seventeen?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** This is where the first real, serious clash of rock and pop and jazz happened, was in '86. Everybody was sort of putting up with it up until that point, but now we're going to start really teaching this stuff. We were already teaching it in Performance Studies, I was forcing it into the curriculum at that point. But nobody wanted to do it. They didn't want to do all these blues things and all those rock things. So I hired a bunch of outside people, and people who just graduated who were great players. And they came in and did a great job. The program started to grow. I think we had 120 or maybe 200 people at the most the first year, or something like that. Now we got a thousand students, it's the largest one in the world. And everybody wants to teach in it because it's a really good program, and it's really good for the students because it's all based on, "What do you need? We're going to give you whatever you want."

**ROB** And what you just said reminds me of one of the big points about it, it's that it's this entry point, not only for  
**HOCHSCHILD:** students but also for faculty. A lot of faculty have started in Five-Week and then joined the faculties for the college.

**ROB ROSE:** Absolutely.

**ROB** But also, you know, a lot of students have gone from this program and then come to the college. So as a  
**HOCHSCHILD:** recruitment tool it's been a really critical part of the college's growth and expansion over the years.

**ROB ROSE:** So the Registrar's office says it's around thirty percent of their entering class is from a summer program. So we started Five-Week, and then that was followed by Guitar Sessions, then followed by the Percussion Festival. So now we're at twenty-something plus programs, and, I mean, it's really an amazing thing, so we have shorter programs, we have three-day programs, five-day programs, and the Five-Week program and stuff like that.

**ROB** It really almost seems like a model that other colleges have gone after in their own programs.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** They're all doing it now, because they realize that we'll be losing all this money, there's nothing going on, the buildings are closed.

**ROB** [Laughs] It's summertime, and nothing's happening.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Let's get some kids in here, quick.

**ROB** There's been some great artists that have come out of that Five-Week program. Some who never came, never

**HOCHSCHILD:** matriculated, like Meghan Trainor comes to mind. And then some like, well, John Mayer.

**ROB ROSE:** John Mayer came to Guitar Sessions. In fact, there's a great picture of him and the guitar player from Maroon 5 at Guitar Sessions.

**ROB** Oh, wow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** That's a great picture.

**ROB** I haven't seen that one, yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And then Charlie Puth, he did the Five-Week twice I think, and then he came to Berklee.

So we started a thing called Day Sessions which was for eleven- to fourteen-year-olds, and we thought it would just be like a local thing. We had a lot of local people calling, "I want my son or daughter to come to Five-Week," and stuff. And if you're not fifteen, you can't really come. So we started this Day Session thing. We thought that would be like a local thing, but it really became international, 'cause international people would say, "Great. We can go to Boston, but they can go to school all day." They can go out and do whatever they want to during the day and stuff. So we just actually had some people who graduated who had gone through Day Sessions, Five-Week, at Berklee. So it's a beautiful success.

**ROB** All the way through the Berklee channel.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And it generates a ton of revenue, and we have recruited thousands of students to Berklee through this way over the years.

**ROB** What's so interesting about the summer programs--and I was involved in Communications for many, many years  
**HOCHSCHILD:** before I came over to the faculty, so I saw this program evolve. I'm trying to think about 1992 when I started, and I know Five-Week was in existence, maybe Guitar Sessions was

**ROB ROSE:** Guitar Sessions and the Percussion Festival, probably. It was probably just those three.

**ROB** Yeah, and now it's twenty, twenty plus programs.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yup. All the instrumental departments.

**ROB** So how does that evolution happen, and how have you managed that? I mean, it's a massive, complicated  
**HOCHSCHILD:** scheduling nightmare and all that. I mean, how does that happen every year?

**ROB ROSE:** [Laughs] The scheduling becomes a big, big issue. The fourth of July is a problem. Depending on when the fourth of July is, it sort of skews the whole summer, really.

**ROB** So you have to wait, like some of the programs start right after the fourth of July, right?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, you know, the best time for us is if we can start around June 30th or so. If you start any earlier than that, you know, if you get a snow day like we do in Boston, then students are still in school, so they can't come to a program and stuff like that. So the later we can get it, the better. So hopefully July 4th is on a Friday or a Saturday or Sunday, or something like that.

**ROB** Right. But I mean, like, the expansion of all these programs, it's a summer program, but it's a daily, year-long  
**HOCHSCHILD:** pursuit, right?

**ROB ROSE:** What happened was, when Guitar Sessions started, and that became successful, and then Percussion Festival started, and we were seeing so many of these students come to the college. And then, like anything else, other instrumental departments wanted in. So they're saying, "Can we do a brass program, can we do a saxophone program." Absolutely, I'm not going to turn anybody down if you want to do something. Maybe we do music business, and things like that, you know, and as we expand with the Conservatory now and things like that, we have Day Sessions: Dance, we have Day Sessions: Born to Perform, which is a young musical theater program for eleven- to fourteen-year-olds, and stuff like that.

**ROB** Programs in Valencia as well.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Programs in Valencia, all of them, yeah. We do them in L.A. Did them there for thirty-five years.

**ROB** Amazing. So another way that younger students come to Berklee is through the High School Jazz Festival, and  
**HOCHSCHILD:** that's been a big part of your contributions as well.

**ROB ROSE:** Huge, yeah. Huge.

**ROB** How did that all come about, and how was that one evolved over the years?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** That was the genius of Lee Berk, 1968. We just celebrated our fiftieth anniversary this year. The first festival was in the 1140 building. [Both laugh] I think there were ten bands or something like that, because we had 1A.

**ROB** Right, right.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The Berk room, right? And of course that used to be reversed the way it is set up now.

**ROB** How so?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The stage used to be on the opposite side, and where the stage is now, there was actually a little balcony there, and the room used to be raked to the stage. So when you walk in the door now, the stage used to be on the left.

**ROB** I didn't know that, okay.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** So that was the first one. I got involved with it about forty-five years ago. I remember being on an adjudication team with John LaPorta and Wes Hensel, Wes Hensel being one of the great lead trumpet players in the world at the time. So we would play with Ray Brown and all these other people and such. Just amazing, and

**ROB** Students come from all over the country, bringing school ensembles from all over the place.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** We've had bands from Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Israel come in for that festival, but mostly the Northeastern region, mostly parts of the U.S., come in for that. So we will have, like, three thousand students, and their parents, and their music teachers and stuff. And what's really amazing--so we had Ellis Marsalis this year come as a guest, and we gave an honorary doctorate. Unbelievably well deserved, of course, as he's been a huge education leader in jazz education and stuff, and of course he's got the first family of jazz. Everybody in his family is, you know, the first

**ROB** Wynton, Branford, Delfeayo

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Delfeayo, all of those, Jason, the whole crew. So he played a set, he packed the place. This is really interesting for me, because he packed! I've had Snarky Puppy play there, and they didn't pack the place. Ellis Marsalis packed the joint. And they gave a standing ovation. And then we gave an honorary degree, so well deserved, and stuff like that. That was a great experience. But the interesting thing is to see kids who are fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old, playing big band music and playing this music that in most cases is pretty archaic museum stuff.

But there is something about growing up playing that music. Being raised as a saxophone player--I mean, I play bass and keyboards and stuff now, but I can still play saxophone. Growing up and playing in a big band as a saxophone player, you learn how to be the fifth of a chord. When you're playing it in a quartet, you're not doing that so much, 'cause you're the soloist, right? But then you have to sort of blend with other people, you know how to be, "Oh, I'm the ninth now," and everything. And then, "I have to play with the trombone player. Oh, I have to play in tune with the trumpet player," and stuff. So it's a really great team sport. Bands of music is a team sport, right? And to see these kids do this, and some of the level they're doing it at, is just unbelievable. Princeton, for instance, New Jersey, I'd like to say is one of our alumni. [Both laugh] He has a great program down there, and I asked him, I said, "So why is your program so good?" Because he wins every year. He said, "We only do this."

**ROB** That's the only festival they compete in?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No. They don't do concert band, they don't do anything--they only do jazz band.

**ROB** Interesting.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The school agreed that they would only do one thing, and they would do it the best they can, and they win every single year.

**ROB** And you feel they make that choice because it prepares them so well for everything else?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, they got the right band director, they've got the support he gets from the parents. I mean, it's just unbelievable.

**ROB** I want to ask about commencement because that's been such a big part among the many things that you've  
**HOCHSCHILD:** done, producing these big commencement shows. And this is a big deal, not only because it's the end of four years for these students, and you help produce the concert and the ceremony. And it's a big deal. Parents pay a lot of money to send their kids to school here, and then the college puts on this weekend. You really want it to deliver well, and it does, year after year after year.

**ROB ROSE:** Terrifying.

**ROB** That's a lot of pressure, huh?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** An unbelievable amount of pressure. Nobody understands how much pressure that is.

**ROB** So help us understand.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Because you want it to be right. The students have been here for four or five years, the parents have paid a ton of money, the students have paid a ton of money. Everybody's put a lot of effort, the teachers put a lot of effort, everybody's put a lot of effort into making this thing happen. And now you gotta deliver something. So before 1983, what would happen is that--and to be honest with you, we could go back to doing this and still be very successful this way, they don't have to do it the sort of way we've been doing it, but--Duke Ellington was here. It was a concert, but it wasn't of Duke Ellington music.

**ROB** 1971. Just gave him the degree.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** There's actually a very cool tape. I'm not sure who has this, but Larry Berk, in all of his infinite wisdom, had a party like they do after commencement, and Duke Ellington was at the party. And Larry said, "Hey, will you play the piano?" So I have a copy of this thing, okay? I'll send you a copy.

**ROB** A cassette tape or something?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I have a copy I can get you of Duke Ellington playing at a party, a solo piano at a party, but taking requests, and somebody coming over and singing with him!

**ROB** Cocktail pianist, Duke Ellington.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, that's it! It's unbelievable, right?

**ROB** Give him a dollar in the glass.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** But eventually, in 1983 when Quincy Jones came, it was thought, "Let's do something different." So Herb Pomeroy was gonna do the concert with his group, and do music that Quincy had written for big band. It's things that he wrote as a student, and stuff like that. All the concerts we had been doing with the Jazz/Rock Ensemble, they said, "Would you like to do pop stuff?" Absolutely. So I got everybody in costumes. We did Thriller!, we did all that stuff. It had never been done. They just blew everybody away. And that was the end of that. So: "You want to do it next year?" [Both laugh] And so, they started realizing they could start asking other people to come in and do things. So that's when you start getting James Taylor, and, you know, all those folks coming in, and Phil Collins and Natalie Cole and Diane Reeves and Steven Tyler and all those.

**ROB** The list goes on and on.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It just goes on and on and on.

**ROB** I actually want to ask you about some of that, what those particular people were like to work with. But you  
**HOCHSCHILD:** mentioned the pressure of delivering a great concert to the parents and the students after four or five years. What about the pressure of being the person who's responsible--say, like, you had a lot of interactions directly with these legendary musicians. Did that feel like a lot of pressure too? What was that like, to work with so many different people on that level?

**ROB ROSE:** It was terrifying, because it was. The pressure was first of all, you wanted to use the right students, so you wanted to give an opportunity to the students who wanted to be involved with the thing. And they're under a lot of pressure that last week to do things too, because they got finals and all these other things going on, right? So everybody is under a lot of heat. So you have to have the right singers, the right instrumentalists, the right arrangers. You want to try to give as many students opportunities as you can. And then sometimes the honorary degree people would change their minds, "Oh, I can't come this year," and we get somebody in April. The concert's in three weeks. They gotta rewrite the whole thing. That happened like two years ago, somebody bagged out on us. You know, it was just really amazing. And then some of them want to perform. Some of them don't want to perform in these things. I find that guitar players don't usually like to perform, 'cause it's a little harder for them because they don't have their guitar sometimes, they don't have their setup. A lot of them go through a lot of big things to be able to do anything, right?

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Jimmy Page did not perform. The Edge did not perform.

**ROB ROSE:** Jimmy Page did not perform. I have a great Jimmy Page story, though.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Let's hear it.

**ROB ROSE:** When I was a kid, with my brother, that band? We were playing this place, and we were opening for The Yardbirds, and Jimmy Page of course was the guitar for The Yardbirds. They ruined our equipment. They used all our stuff and they blew it up! [Rob H laughs] I told him that when I saw him, I said, "You know" and he remembered the tour!

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Oh, no way.

**ROB ROSE:** He remembered the tour, 'cause it was a little sort of college tour they were doing. And they ended up playing this one night thing. So it was kind of a funny thing. Singers will come up and sing once in a while. But the only way you get that done is if you had done some other singers, and done them really, really well. Because the word gets out, and they can see things. They go on YouTube, and they can check stuff, and stuff like that. So, you know, Steven Tyler said any number of times that the second best band he ever played with was the commencement concert.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Wow.

**ROB ROSE:** He said that any number of times in different interviews, and stuff like that. He says Aerosmith, and he says there's a thing at Berklee. So that was kind of a nice--he was great that night.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Yeah, well, I remember--that one, I still get goosebumps when I think about that. He did "Dream On" with the students, and it was just like the whole room seemed to be vibrating, the BPC. It was amazing.

**ROB ROSE:** Because he had--Zambello wrote a special arrangement. We started with strings, we had planted that one for him to do. And when I talked to Dianne, the way that happened was Dianne Reeves said she would sing. And she just wanted to do a blues. So she came up and did a blues, and I said, "You know, I'm gonna get him to sing, I'm gonna force him to do it," because she's doing it.

**ROB** Right, peer pressure.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** So I went out on the stage, and I said, "Hey, Steven!"--he was in the audience--"Want to come up and sing?"

**ROB** Oh, you went out into the audience?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No, I just called him out, 'cause he was sitting there.

**ROB** Oh, wow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** He said, "Okay!" He comes up.

**ROB** Put him on the spot!

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And I said "Let's do 'Dream On,'" because I knew from another meeting I had with him that he could pull that one out of his hat. He can just do that. It's kind of an interesting thing. He's always on. He was very cool.

**ROB** So, yeah, what was he like?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Phil Collins--I'm sorry--but Phil Collins was the same way. Natalie Cole just came out and started singing; she just walked out. So go ahead, what were you going to say about?

**ROB** Well, yeah, I guess one thing I wanted to

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Because I remember you at the clinic, you know.

**ROB** Yeah!

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Remember when we did a clinic?

**ROB** Yes, he played solo piano and played "Dream On." That was crazy too.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** That's right. I remember you and I walked in the building at the same time, with him in front of us.

**ROB** That's right, and the moment later, there he was at the piano.

**HOCHSCHILD:**



**ROB ROSE:** Just rocking it away.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Yeah, it was amazing. So what was it like--I kind of want to go through a list of some of these people who've come here, these gigantic names in the industry and just get your quick reaction to what it was like to interact with them, personally, musically, whatever it might have been. So you said a little bit about Steven Tyler. He seemed pretty laid-back that whole time.

**ROB ROSE:** He was tremendous, really really great.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** So Quincy Jones, the very first one, what was that like?

**ROB ROSE:** Quincy was really interesting, because the tie I had with him--and I didn't realize it, I didn't even think about it--is a drummer named John Robinson that I had as a student, and we used to play together a lot, and we spent a lot of time in the recording studio. When John was a student, he wanted to be the drummer for Chaka Khan. And when he finally left Boston, he went to L.A., and the next thing you know, he's the drummer with Rufus. And the next thing you know, he's Quincy's drummer, and he's on the Michael Jackson records, and stuff like that. So when Quincy came and I introduced myself, he said, "Yes, I know, John's told me about you."

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Oh, wow.

**ROB ROSE:** That was like, are you kidding me? You know, I was blown away with that one.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** You had John as a student, like in the seventies, or?

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, seventies, yeah. We spent a lot of time in the recording studio.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** And Quincy's done other things with the college. You've seen him since those days as well?

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, he was back maybe six or seven years ago. We did something over in David Friend Recital Hall.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Bonnie Raitt.

**ROB ROSE:** Bonnie, she was very very nice. She didn't want to perform--again, the guitar thing. It's that setup stuff. Very, very nice. Very talented.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Let's see. Aretha Franklin. What was it like to have her on campus?

**ROB ROSE:** Wow, that was really interesting. I don't fly. And Aretha doesn't fly.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** You two have a lot in common.

**ROB ROSE:** So we have this in common. But I'll drive on the road and go over a hill. And Aretha doesn't want to do that. She likes it flat. So she was going through some problems, and stuff like that. So she drove in, and she wanted to be at the concert, but she couldn't be at the concert because they had to take a different way to get here because of the road--wherever they were, there were a lot of hills that they had to reroute themselves around. So they missed the concert. But she shows up on Saturday morning. It was at the Matthews Arena, early, and it was pouring out. It was pouring out. They drive in, and this water, she has to step in the water just to get inside the building out of the car. And all of a sudden, I end up in the room with Aretha Franklin. It's just her and I, for forty-five minutes.

**ROB** Wow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It was like talking to my aunt. She was telling me, she was like, well, she likes to stop at Walmart, 'cause she likes the nylons they have there, but she was--it was just unbelievable. And then Donna McElroy came. Donna is one of our great faculty singers.

**ROB** Yeah, we did one of these a little while ago.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** She's been in four or five thousand records and stuff. She doesn't like to brag about herself, but Donna is one of the great singers in the world. She really wanted to meet her, and I brought her in, and that was a great time, with Aretha Franklin and stuff like that. So Aretha was great.

**ROB** Yeah. Willie Nelson.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You know, that may have been my favorite time.

**ROB** Oh yeah?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah.

**ROB** I saw a picture of you on his bus. I was on that bus too, during that visit. So, yeah, why is that your favorite?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, 'cause my wife, if you remember, loved country music since we were kids. And so, I remember in 1983, doing the jingles and stuff like that, there was a convention in Dallas. So we drove from here to Dallas to this convention, and Always on My Mind had just come out and it was a big record. I said, "It'd be great if we could actually see Willie in Texas, can you imagine that?" and we're just joking about it. So I go to the convention, come back one night. She says, "Willie's playing a place called Billy Bob's in Fort Worth." I said, "Really?" I said, "Well, see if you can get tickets." My wife didn't drive, we only had the one car, and stuff like that. She got tickets, so I call up and I say, "What time is the show?" He said, "Seven o'clock." "What time is Willie going on?" He says, "Whenever Willie wants to." That's what they told me. So there were five bands. This is a great experience, there were five bands. Really great bands. I never saw anybody turn bands over like these people turned bands over. On and off--you never even knew there was a break. I mean, it was just unbelievable. Willie went on about eleven o'clock. [Both laugh] We left at two, and he was still playing. He was still on.

**ROB** Oh, wow. What year was this?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** 1983.

**ROB** '83, okay.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It was just an amazing time. What I liked about Willie is that he's sort of committed to just doing the music. The song becomes the most important thing. When you're doing anything--and I preach this big time--is the song dictates everything that goes on. We just did the Paul Simon Great American Songbook. I had to have two arrangements rewritten, because they were ego trips. They weren't the song. You can't just change the song. You gotta be able to do--with Paul Simon, it's like changing Mozart or Beethoven. What are you gonna change? The guy's a great songwriter, so you don't change stuff, you know. It's like changing Stevie Wonder. Why would you do that? You can do adaptations, you can do things, but you can't just change it for sake, you know.

So Willie, when he was here, Kris Kristofferson was here at the same time. That whole camaraderie--Kristofferson has great stories. And what I realize is that Kristofferson was there when Johnny Cash got an honorary degree. I'm sorry, it was when Kristofferson got an honorary degree, Johnny Cash came and wanted to give it to him. And they let him give it to him and he was touched by that. And Kristofferson's mother, who couldn't stand country music--you know Bobby McGee?

**ROB** Yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You know the line where it says, "Better place to leave?" What's that line?

**ROB** Oh, I don't remember it. I know, I saw him like two years ago, too.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, but you know the song, you know the line though, right?

**ROB** Yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** He wrote that about his mother when they threw him out of the house when he said he was going to be a country singer. [Rob H laughs] So anyway, he was touched by the Johnny Cash thing. So when they announced Willie, he wanted to come and be able to be involved with Willie's thing. What's interesting is that he thinks Willie is God, and Willie thinks of him as the son. It's a really--so Kris was having some memory problems, and stuff like that. And so when I set him up on the stage, Willie had it so they were looking at each other, so that he could feed Kris all the stuff you need to feed, and Kris could see him, and stuff. It was very touching stuff.

**ROB** Yeah. How about the Wayne Shorter

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You want a funny story about that?

**ROB** Oh, yeah!

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You want a funny story?

**ROB** Do it.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** This is really cool. So Willie's son's in there.

**ROB** Oh, right.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** And we all know Willie is a big weed supporter.

**ROB** Really? Yes. I've heard about that. [Both laugh]

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** So his sons are adults now, so, I mean, they play with him. They're both really good musicians, Lukas and Micah, right? So Willie decided he didn't like the length of the solo for "Nite Life" that we were doing. So they called me in the afternoon, and so I went over to the bus. That's where the picture came up. So Willie and I are on the bus, and he's trying to explain to me that he wants more solo time. But he doesn't know how to really say that. It's a really--so they're playing the record, he said, "I know the record really [unkown] exactly." So we're good to go. So I'm gonna go in and rewrite the thing now, right? So all of a sudden, so I'm on the piano figuring out exactly what it was going to be, and his kids come in. So it's just me now, Lukas and Micah are on the stage, nobody else. And my wife is there. She's in the audience--she's sitting there, she came over with me early. So there's only the four of us in the place. And all of a sudden--so we're gonna re-rehearse this thing now at five o'clock with Willie, to make sure that it's the right length and stuff like that, right? So this is probably at three-thirty or something that day. And the cops show up. The cops come in, and say, "We're gonna bring the dogs in, 'cause we always have the dogs do a sweep for bombs and things like that before the concerts." So I'm introducing them to my wife, Lukas, and Micah, and the cop comes in and says, "Okay, we got to bring the dogs in," and stuff like that, right? So I turn around, look at Lukas, and we just started laughing. He was like, he grabs his cell phone, "I better get on the phone now and call home really quick." [Both laugh] Of course, home's all the way back on the bus, right? Because the dogs sniff marijuana as well.

**ROB** Right, yeah, but everything was okay, nothing got in the way.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Everything was fine, I told them, "You gotta wait 'til Willie gets out of here before you bring the dogs in." [Both laugh]

**ROB** I do remember there was a certain fragrance emanating from the bus that day.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** One of our honorary doctorates refused to go on the bus because of that.

**ROB** Is that right? One of the years that sticks out in my mind is the David Bowie/Wayne Shorter year. What do you  
**HOCHSCHILD:** remember from that one?

**ROB ROSE:** I remember David Bowie, he was very funny. Neither one of them played. But when I met Bowie for the first time, though--the reception's in the library, right? So he came in and said hi, and I said, "We're gonna play some music for you guys tonight," and stuff like that. He said, "Yeah, I'm really enjoying that." We got a little trio just playing some stuff in the corner. He was making fun of it. Not making fun of it, he was sort of just joking that that was the concert, you know, and that kind of thing. But he was very happy, he was a very nice guy. And Wayne's Wayne.

**ROB** Yeah. Meaning what? [Laughs]

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** He's a really creative guy. He's all over the place.

**ROB** Yeah. What about Melissa Etheridge? That was the Aretha Franklin year, I believe.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yup, Melissa performed.

**ROB** Yeah, she performed. So what was she like to be with?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** She was great. We talked about what song to do, put it in the right key and stuff. And what we would normally do is we'd try to get a version that was the live version, so we'd know that they're doing that. So if the keys are usually different than the record, they're usually lower and stuff like that, so that was one rehearsal, and we did it.

**ROB** Yeah, it was a great one. So when you think back, some of the students--and you've mentioned a few of them  
**HOCHSCHILD:** before--but who are some of the other students that you've had or that have gone through, been in the concerts, that are names that haven't come up yet that you just kind of want to mention having worked with?

**ROB ROSE:** Oh man, there's hundreds of them. Will Wells is a really good example. Will ended up being with Imagine Dragons, you know. He's a great composer, a great keyboard player, great conductor, he can write any style of music, you know. There's a lot of instrumentalists-- Jonathan O'Neal, who's currently in school, is a really talented guitar player, singer, right. DeDe--there's a student here named Dede. He was in the Paul Simon concert. He's a piano player, singer, just incredible. DJ Scaife comes to mind, he's another singer-songwriter, piano player and stuff like that. Matter of fact, a Berklee alum guy, a friend of mine named Victor Vanacore, had called a few years ago about putting together a band for a movie. And so he said, "I need to have you put a band together for a movie," he said, "Will you do it?" I said, "Okay, I'll do it." I didn't know what the movie was. So the producer calls me and says, "Okay, I need this, I want a GB band, older kind of band, and stuff like that," I said, "Okay." So I hired DJ, he was the piano player in that band, and then Ken Zambello who played bass, I played saxophone. Brian Lewis was the trumpet player. So it was mostly a Berklee alumni band really, more than anything. It was Ted 2, which we wish we weren't really part of that, but I hadn't planned on being in it, but the tenor player backed out so I took the seat.

**ROB** Another big thing you were so instrumental on is the Beantown Jazz Festival, and I wanted to make sure we  
**HOCHSCHILD:** talked about this, and actually Terri Lyne Carrington, of course, comes to mind when I think about that festival and so many other Berklee things. You were probably on the faculty when she was a student as well, and now she's on the faculty, and Grammy winner and composer and everything else that she's done. So I kind of want to just ask about the Beantown Festival, working with Terri Lyne on that. What has that been all about, doing these shows in the city, free concerts?

**ROB ROSE:** Terri Lyne is one of my favorite people on the planet. I've known her since she was very young. She, for me, is the best drummer in the world, she's just--I've told her this for years now, but if you listen to her play, she plays cymbals in a way nobody else can play. And she doesn't do anything unless there's a reason for it. She does so many things that makes it sound so easy, and you go try to do that, but it ain't happening, because she's Terri Lyne Carrington, you know what I mean? She can just--what a great musician. Unbelievable ears. She's a really good singer, you know, she's a great singer.

**ROB** Yeah. She's been doing more and more of that.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, and I've been encouraging that. I said, "Just take it over. It's all yours if you want to do that," you know? It's just great working with her, and stuff like that. We work together doing Beantown. Beantown's really sort of coming into its own thing. People look forward to it every single year. We've had great acts there. We get great audiences, a great crowd shows up there. It is, to me, what Boston really is and what everything's supposed to be. You got a great melding of every person in the world comes to this thing, you know, just everybody's there.

**ROB** It's true, and like, huge numbers of people, and it's a nice thing.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Everybody gets along and there's no fighting.

**ROB** No, exactly, it's all about music.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** The United Nations should be the Beantown Jazz Festival.

**ROB** Yeah, let's invite them and see if they can learn something.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, learn something from those guys.

**ROB** Yeah, and there's like fifty--there's been as many as 50,000 people, or some crazy number like that, on the nice

**HOCHSCHILD:** days, and it's free, there's food, there's all this other stuff

**ROB ROSE:** Great food.

**ROB** And I know that everyone around the city, a lot of people around the city talk about that show and look forward

**HOCHSCHILD:** to it every year. It's like this gift that Berklee gives to the city.

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, I mean it's an amazing thing when it became available for us to get involved with it. Roger Brown, our President, had the foresight of saying, "Let's do this." I remember meeting with Larry Simpson, who of course is my boss and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and things. We talked about it, and I said, "Absolutely, let's do it," you know, so we went into it. It's just a great experience. People have a great time, we have a great time, you meet some great musicians. And what we've done with Terri Lyne now is that depending on who the clinicians are, they'll come in a couple of days early, do clinics, work with the student band and stuff like that, and, you know, the college gets a lot of things out of it that way.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Absolutely. One of the big developments in the last few years has been the merging with Boston Conservatory, so this has been just a huge change.

**ROB ROSE:** I was a big fan of that from the jump. For years--I wanted to do that for twenty-five years.

**ROB** Is that right?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yep.

**ROB** And you were involved in conversations with people about that?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, with Roger and things, yeah.

**ROB** So how has that changed things, and why did you feel it was such an important thing to do?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Well, they're right there, for one thing. And the other thing is, you know, I was a composition major when I was at Berklee. Berklee had then, and has now, one of the best composition departments in the entire world. We never got any credit for that. And I'm a company guy, period, you know, I'm just, I'm there, man, like, nobody's going to get into the family and punch the family, right? The Conservatory has also got really talented programs and talented students and talented faculty, and it just seemed like a marriage made in heaven to me. For the pop side of life, what the singers need is they need acting, singing, dancing, a music director--they need all these things. We can give them the singing, the music director, and some of the things. We couldn't give them the dancing and the acting. And there are really great singers who have learned how to do that. They either do it naturally, or they have taken a ton of lessons. I mean, I know people who work with a lot of these people on the outside; I know the choreographer that works with Faith Hill and all these people, and teaches them how to move their arms and things like that, so that things are good. So we were missing that. We now have that opportunity to be able to pull that together. They have a great musical theater program. Berklee's been doing musical theater for many years now, but not really organized. Now it's organized, and so the two things together--I mean, what could be better, right? So I would love to see the composition thing just kick everybody's butt. [Rob H laughs] If I was running a conservatory someplace else, I'd be worried about this one.

**ROB** You're pretty competitive about these things, aren't you?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Oh yeah. It's a game. Team sport, remember, it's team sports.

**ROB** Yeah, that's right.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I loved basketball when I was in high school. I was a good baseball player.

**ROB** I'm sure, yeah. You still play?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No. My dream was, though, before I retired, I wanted to do twenty balls at home plate in Fenway. That's really what I wanted to have.

**ROB** You mean take twenty swings?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I wanted to do twenty swings. [Gestures and vocalizes]

**ROB** Has that happened?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No.

**ROB** We gotta make that happen somehow.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I don't know if it will.

**ROB** Well, it's a little cold right now.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It's a little cool to do it now. I could hit home runs pretty well, and I'd like to see if I could pop one out of there.

**ROB** Roger, if you're watching this, maybe you can help make this happen?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, come on, Roger. [Rob H laughs] My brother wants to know where the car is. [Laughs]

**ROB** Concert operations, you know, that's another thing that's really grown during the Rob Rose era. As you said, the  
**HOCHSCHILD:** BPC was not even really a thing when you first started. Now, multiple venues, we have this new one right down the street here in the restaurant. So talk about the expansion of this whole thing.

**ROB ROSE:** In the old days, you couldn't get anybody to even do a concert. Nobody wanted to do them. Anywhere. I never understood that, but it was hard to get people to actually do concerts. I mean, we'd have to ask, you had to go around begging people, "Will you do a concert?" and they would do a concert once a while, but of course it's going in other things. But now we have like, you know, the Berk room, the Colvin room, we have the Red Room at 939, we have the David Friend Recital Hall, we have the main stage at the Conservatory, Seully Hall. It's just grown immensely in terms of the rooms and concert halls, and stuff like that.

**ROB** Yeah, it's gotta be one of the biggest multi-venue concert facilities anywhere.

**HOCHSCHILD:**



**ROB ROSE:** Absolutely. And they're being used all day long, every day of the week.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** And there's also--you know, the Berklee Performance Center is also host to "pro shows," as we call them here, concerts outside of the college, so that's been sort of something to kind of balance as well, but how do you sort of manage? I know you oversee the department that does that, but what's really been the key to that continuing to grow in a really productive way?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, again, it's really sort of trying to give students a really professional experience. So we're lucky enough that with the work-study program, we have hundreds of people working on work-study for Concert Operations and Video Services and things. So the box office--we have a box office manager, but then we have a bunch of students working in the box office. We have a front of house manager, we have a lot of students who are working as ushers and things. So the place is being managed really by students. The crew, when you're going to get a concert set up, they do my shows, they do Kris Kristofferson when he's playing here, or somebody's playing here, or something.

So the students get a really great experience of working with pros and with people here, and stuff like that. And we do that in all rooms; the Red Room Snarky Puppy broke in the Red Room. They played the Red Room probably four times. Michael Kramer, who books that room, thought they were going to be really good, so he would cut deals with them. So they'd play, and play, and play, and they were doing it they had to do four nights there, rather than one night. And we get to that point, and he said, "Well, let's do one in the Performance Center." So they came to the Performance Center, and they did a half house the first time. And the next time, they're doing the full performance there and stuff like that, so we helped nurture them along a little bit.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** That's amazing. Yeah, now they're huge, they're gigantic rooms.

**ROB ROSE:** Huge. Yeah, that record they did with Lalah Hathaway, and Lalah singing that chord. [Laughs]

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Oh yeah, 'cause Lalah can sing multiple notes.

**ROB ROSE:** Lalah can do anything she wants. She's one of the great singers, so she's unbelievable.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Absolutely. It's hard to imagine Berklee without Rob Rose. How do you see things happening next, now, without you around here, in terms of

**ROB ROSE:** It'll get better.

**ROB HOCHSCHILD:** Yeah. [Both laugh] Instant improvement, right? I don't know. So what do you hope for in the future, with all of these things you started up here?

**ROB ROSE:** Well, you know the college was put together originally to help people learn about the music they wanted to know about, and then give them the stuff they needed to be able to go out and have careers. And we've done a good job of that the whole time. And I think that the people who are in power understand that, and see that, and want that to continue. And so I think in a lot of respects--we have the faculty, we have a great faculty.

**ROB** Absolutely.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Great faculty. It takes a great faculty. And it's a very talented faculty, in terms of not just people who know about this stuff, they're practitioners, they're out in the business, they're making music, they're working all the time, and stuff like that. That's a big difference between us and other places that don't have that kind of thing. So I think the future is really bright. The thing is, a quarter note is always gonna be a quarter note, that's always gonna get one beat depending on where it is, right? So that's important. So I think delivery systems. So the things for me is I would like to see new ways of teaching instrumentalists about their instruments. I think there's faster ways to do that stuff, especially with the technology that's available now. I think ear training can get improved a lot in the future, because of the technology. Ear training-- the ears are the most important thing they have, hardest thing to develop. So unless you're gifted with great ears, you have to really work at great ears. And that can be a lifetime, and it never stops, really. I mean, one of the things I'm looking forward to doing when I retire is actually going back and studying music. 'Cause I realize there's so much I don't know, I'm hoping I have time to be able to actually learn a couple of things about it, because I don't know as much as I would like.

**ROB** Amazing, that's great.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** So I think that this technology involvement, and being able to help students be able to do some things faster, so they can spend more time on their creativity and being able to go out and be able to do the things they want to do. I wish I was twenty, because I think with the things that are available today, the media and things like that, you have a really great shot at becoming major forces in the industry. Very difficult to do, 'cause it's always easy to get a record deal, very hard to have a career. A career means you're doing this when you're ninety years old, you don't give it up after you're twenty-eight or something like that, you know. That's not a career, that's like, okay, it happened for a little bit. 'Cause I love this stuff. It's all I've ever done. What you try to impart to people is that if you love this as much as I love this, then we're in the same game and we're gonna do really well together.

**ROB** So when you say it's all about having a sustainable career, loving it is a big part of that? Is that what you're saying?

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** That's the whole deal. I would teach my students that if you were a doctor, it would be the same thing, you would just be--you would be a doctor, and not this. When you wake up every day, there's two things you do. One is to become the best person you can be, and the other one is to be the best musician you can be. Both of these things are not attainable. It gives you a career.

**ROB** They're not attainable. It's the work to get there.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** They're not attainable. If you keep trying and trying and trying and trying, hopefully you'll get - and I think that's why you have Aretha Franklin, and that's why you have Beethoven, Charlie Parker, and all these, Louis Armstrong. Because you can see you can do this, but it takes a lot of work to get to that point, you know.

**ROB** Yeah. Something to aim for.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Absolutely.

**ROB** So you just mentioned that, you know, you'll retire in another week, and one of the things you're looking forward  
**HOCHSCHILD:** to is studying music, which is a really cool thing to hear.

**ROB ROSE:** I'm getting all my practice stuff set up now.

**ROB** So you mean you're gonna shed on your instrument and listen to a lot of music?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Every day, start four hours a day, every morning.

**ROB** Is that right? Playing the saxophone?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** I'm going to work.

**ROB** That's great, that's great. So do you see yourself putting a band together, playing some gigs, what's going to  
**HOCHSCHILD:** happen next?

**ROB ROSE:** Mostly recordings. I have at least three recording projects that I need to do relatively quickly, and

**ROB** Recordings of compositions of yours?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** No, I'm gonna do a couple recordings, two CDs of me playing some tunes, and then another one of some hymns, and then Nancy Marshall, who teaches here--we've done some recordings in the past--we're gonna do some more recordings and stuff like that. Some things that she writes, and stuff like that.

**ROB** Great.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** We're gonna push the envelope that way a little bit.

**ROB** So maybe we'll get to hear--so you won't necessarily be playing a show of these recordings here at the BPC, but  
**HOCHSCHILD:** maybe we'll get to hear your music.

**ROB ROSE:** That's not the intent.

**ROB** Yeah, gotcha.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Robrosemusic.com

**ROB** Okay! Is that site up now?  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It will be.

**ROB** Okay, all right. Rob Rose Music.  
**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It's been there for ten years, but I haven't turned it on.

**ROB** You've got the domain name. Look forward to that. Anything we haven't talked about? Any memories, stories that  
**HOCHSCHILD:** we haven't hit yet that you'd like to get across?

**ROB** I think that having worked for three Berklee presidents, having been hired by the founder and then working with  
**HOCHSCHILD:** Lee Berk, and then with Roger Brown, they all have very different work approaches, but they all have the same direction, which is really interesting. And again, all three of them are focused on the student, and stuff like that, so I think that's a big deal for me.

I think that Warrick Carter, who was the Dean of Faculty back in the eighties, was a very important figure from Berklee. Larry Simpson, who is the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, is an amazing person in terms of where we are now, and being able to lead the direction into the future. So I think we're set up very, very well that way. We didn't talk about Livingston Taylor. If we hadn't talked about Livingston, he would be very upset with me for not mentioning his name.

**ROB** [Laughs] Let's do it.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Liv, I'm gonna mention your name! We met probably almost thirty years ago now, and he was doing some clinics. And I went to him, just out of the blue, because I was teaching a class called Stage Performance Workshop, and he's the best at it. And I said, "Would you be interested in teaching?" He said, "I don't have a degree or anything," I said, "I don't care, you're great at that." And so he agreed to do it, and he's been here for twenty-eight years or something like that, and he does an amazing job teaching.

**ROB** That class is great.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** If you have stage fright, he'll get you out of that and get you on stage, so you feel comfortable, so that you feel like you're in your living room. That's the key to the whole thing.

**ROB** Yeah, I've watched him. I've sat in on that class just to see what he does, it's all about connecting with the  
**HOCHSCHILD:** audience and just sort of making sure it's all about providing this sort of gift of music to the audience. It's kind of beautiful.

**ROB ROSE:** Who are you, who are you? Show us who you are, and stuff like that. Berklee does a really good job with that with a lot of students, I think, with most students. If you want to come here, and you may or may not know what it is you want to do, we give you an opportunity to be able to find out what that is.

I also think the other thing that's important about Berklee is that it provides opportunity. And it still provides an opportunity, because there are different levels of students when they come. Some are really unbelievable players, and some are not unbelievable players, and I think most of us get into the business because we want to be players. And what I find is that I've seen great players come in and they're playing the same way when they go out. You haven't improved at all. You're a great player, but they should be expanding, they should be pushing stuff, and they're not pushing stuff. Not everybody, but once in a while you see that. And you see other people come in, who may have not been as great a player when they came in, and in four or five years, you see this transformation that's like, are you kidding me? This is real stuff going on here. This person is actually pushing people, you know, and they're pushing their music, and stuff like that. There's nothing nicer, I think, than when people start feeling what's in them is coming out, and they're pushing the edge just a little bit. A little bit this way, a little bit that way.

If you look at Susan Tedeschi, Susan never played guitar while she was here. She plays guitar with a lot of different people today, right? Her husband's a really great guitar player.

**ROB** Yes, he is.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** But Susan is one of the greatest. I mean, she's a great singer, great singer, but she's also a really talented guitar player, and she taught herself how to do that. Charlie Puth, he's going to end up being--if he's not the star for the next twenty years, he's going to be a major producer, 'cause he's great, he's a really talented guy.

**ROB** Songwriter, singer.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Yeah, he's got the whole thing. Meghan Trainor's the same thing. She'll probably get into being a producer or something, 'cause she's really talented, she knows how to write, great songwriter, and stuff like that. And we got Lalah Hathaway--Kenya Hathaway, her sister, is on The Voice, I think, one of the background singers on The Voice, and she's been here for quite some time.

**ROB** Yeah, it's amazing, the impact on the industry that the college had and had through people like you, it's

**HOCHSCHILD:** amazing, just going through all these names. It's huge. And of course these people are responsible for their own success, but the fact that this is such an important part of what they do when they're nineteen, twenty, twenty-one years old, performing in the BPC, summer programs

**ROB ROSE:** It's a launching pad for a lot of people. I see the Performance Center really as our football stadium. So when you come to Singers Showcase, that's our football game.

**ROB** Right, yeah.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** We're showing you the best of the best here, and that's a great launching pad for a lot of different folks, depending on what you want to do. I mean, John Blackwell was the drummer in that band, and he went around with Prince for fifteen years, that kind of thing.

**ROB** It's true.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** You know, those things happen.

**ROB** Yeah, I like that analogy.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Hey, thank you.

**ROB** Thank you, Rob, this has been great. Rob Rose, Vice President for Special Programs. Fifty-one years at Berkeley.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Fifty-one plus! Let's have a nice round of applause for that. [Gestures] That's enough, that's enough.

**ROB** Somehow we're going to soldier on without you, but thank you for the amazing

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** It's in great hands, and thank you for being here, and all you've done, 'cause you and I have worked together for a long time and it's been a pleasure.

**ROB** Yeah, we have, twenty-five, twenty-six years. Back at you, Rob.

**HOCHSCHILD:**

**ROB ROSE:** Great, great respect for what you do. Thanks.

**ROB** Thank you.

**HOCHSCHILD:**