

What I Love About...

Stan Getz

By Austin Vickrey

Stan Getz Overview

- Born - February 2nd, 1927, Philadelphia, PA
- Died - June 6th, 1991, Malibu, CA
- His paternal grandparents (Harris and Beckie Gayetski) were originally from Kiev area of the Russian Empire (Ukraine) and migrated to London to escape Anti-Jewish rioting. His father, Al, was born there and emigrated to the US in 1912.
- Began saxophone at the age of 13 and began practicing 8 hours a day. Joined the All City High School Orchestra (NYC) and studied with bassoonist Simon Kovar of the NY Philharmonic. He continued to play saxophone as well.
- 1943 (age 16) - Stan joined trombonist Jack Teagarden's band where he played along Nat King Cole and Lionel Hampton.

Stan Getz Overview

- After playing with Stan Kenton, Jimmy Dorsey, and Benny Goodman, he joined Woody Herman's band (1947-1949) in the "Second Herd" and acquired wide attention in the saxophone section as one of the "Four Brothers" (with Serge Chaloff, Zoot Sims, and Herbie Steward).
- After leaving Herman's band, Getz was able to start his solo career.
- He was the leader on almost all of his recording sessions after 1950.
- Influences: Jack Teagarden (served as his guardian on the road), Lester Young is the clearest influence in Getz's musical style and approach.
- Hit with Johnny Smith in 1952 "Moonlight in Vermont"
- Mid to late 50's - Getz performed with several groups and quintets/sextets playing "cool jazz" and the like. Johnny Smith, Oscar Peterson, Horace Silver

Stan Getz Overview

- 1960's - Became a central figure in introducing bossa nova music to the American audience.
- "Jazz Samba" - 1962 - Johnny Smith - Won a Grammy in 1963 for his performance from this album with "Desafinado." Sold over 1 million copies and awarded a gold disc.
- Also recorded album "Jazz Samba Encore!" With Brazilian guitarist Luis Bonfá which also sold 1 million copies.
- 1963 - Most famous for recording "Getz/Gilberto" album and the song "The Girl from Ipanema" featuring Antonio Carlos Jobim, João Gilberto, and Astrud Gilberto. The album won 2 Grammys for best album and best single.

Stan Getz - Impact on me as a musician

- It took me a while to get into Stan Getz. The first recordings I heard were some of the bossa nova recordings and to me, they weren't very exciting. I was very young in still into the flashier bebop playing.
- As I began to listen more to the smaller jazz groups he led, I became more and more fascinated with his playing.
- He passed away in 1991 and I was just barely starting saxophone and had never heard of him until I was in college (1998-2000).

Stan Getz - What grabs me about his music

- SOUND! Stan has one of the most unique tenor saxophone sounds. It's light, breathy, sweet, and not very bright at all.
- The fluidity of his playing. He seems to float over the chord changes and utilizes the upper register of the tenor sax that sounds beautiful.
- His inflection and style are light and unobtrusive but can be aggressive when the music calls for it.
- His ability to play the exact style for what is needed of the music.

Stan Getz - Notable Recordings

- Woody Herman Band - "Four Brothers" - 1947 <https://youtu.be/edm8uenCtrg>
- Chet Baker & Stan Getz - "West Coast Live" - 1953 - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1vTNGM5zLFdpEOwfU3g60HiQOdgLCESa>
- Stan Getz & Charlie Bird - "Jazz Samba" - 1962 - <https://youtu.be/gCKNCWgZvds>
 - Desafinado
- Getz/Gilberto - 1963 - https://youtu.be/_wXefXHkk3M
 - The Girl From Ipanema
- Captain Marvel - 1974 - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_mbGqOzj_YujibhsrjUFYKVG5BUEp0CG0s
 - Featuring Chick Corea
- Live Performance 1990 - "Voyage" - <https://youtu.be/4R-CFI9TB7c>
 - From his final concert in Munich - link to full concert - <https://youtu.be/y5GiOE1an9g>

Stan Getz - The Take Away

- Great tenor saxophonist to listen to for learning vocabulary, style, and sound.
- His sound is almost instantly recognizable.
- Known for his contribution to bebop, big bands, cool jazz, and post bop.
- Check out bossa nova recordings and as many quartet/quintet recordings to get the full effect of Getz.