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This month I've had the pleasure of chatting to three very different trumpet players: **Georgina Jackson**, Andrea Giuffredi and Brian Evans, all united by their nerdy love of the trumpet and by being involved in the International Trumpet Guild Conference (May 31<sup>st</sup> - June 4<sup>th</sup>, Anaheim, California). I love a drink with people I interview, but this month I'd have been globally challenged, so this piece has emerged from a phone chat with Georgina (who had just come back from working a cruise).

Georgina is a Wigan trumpet player (Wigan may be known for pies and rugby, but it also has a cracking jazz scene) who has spent the last thirty years crafting a fantastic career as a lead player. Female leads are still uncommon, but we are definitely seeing a cultural shift to gender equality in the industry, in part because of the graft and dedication by women like Georgina. I'm not here to talk gender and brass though; it's a hackneyed topic that a few hundred words can't do justice. So I ask Georgina about her life in music.

Georgina began playing aged nine when Ian Darrington (leader of WYJO - Wigan Youth Jazz Orchestra - one of the best youth jazz ensembles in the UK) happened to come into a maths lesson scouting for new recruits; Georgina loathed maths, so found a keen interest in the trumpet. Although not from a musical family, her parents and school gave huge encouragement, even when she tried to quit and she joined WYJO at 13. Like so many current professionals, youth community music proved an inspiration, and she learnt her craft sitting next to the likes of Andy Greenwood and Craig Wild (now fantastic session musicians) and working with world renowned guest tutors Bobby Shew and Kenny Baker. For someone whose ambition was to 'play the high notes at the end of pieces, like Maynard' Georgina was lucky to be given lessons on sound, range, the wedge breath etc. by true masters, who would then check in next year to make sure she was still doing it right.

Her first professional gig was with the Andy Prior Big Band at the Blackpool Tower Ballroom at 18, then on to Salford to study music. Her life was taken up with big band Sinatra tours and she began to do London shows. If, as lead, your job as a lead player is to swing hard, play with a big sound and stylistically shape the section, then I figured Georgina must have some words of wisdom she could share. She suggests: "Sing as well as play - if you mentally sing as you play it opens everything up. If you can hear what you're about to play, especially as a lead, hear it, take a breath and be confident it's going to come out."

Her trumpet playing was inspired by the likes of Conrad Gozzo and Snooky Young; loving the phrasing, sound, power, everything about their playing. Naturally she was also exposed to the big band vocalists - Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee etc. -and singing became part of her musical development. Having accidentally entered a TV talent competition some ten years ago (singing down the phone) and then getting through to the finals, Georgina spent the last decade shaping a career as a singer and trumpet player, with vocals a little like a cross between Diana Krall and Peggy Lee and a trumpet sound that mimics the greats. It's a wonder she's got just one CD out - 'Peggy, Duke and Benny' <http://www.georginajackson.net/peggy-duke-and-benny/>. In the late 2000s Georgina had sat 'with the lads' in the back for too long and it was time to create a big band to showcase her talents. I asked her how she developed her stage presence.

"It's really difficult when you start, especially when you've backed a lot of big artists. When you step out at the front, you're still mentally at the back. I had to force myself to pretend I was someone else, as you get older it gets much easier to be in charge and develop presence. Really, you have to remember that people come to watch you to be entertained, they want a good night out. It's my job to put people at ease."

Seven years ago Georgina was diagnosed with breast cancer, halting her playing. Coincidentally six months later Annette Browne (then trumpet player with Chicago) was also diagnosed. Since then, Georgina and her partner (MD Pete Long) have been fundraising through musical events at the Mount Vernon Breast Cancer Research Centre. Georgina and Annette are soon to release a duet of Ted Heath's classic *Stardust*.

Georgina favourite career highlights have been gigging with Frank Sinatra Jnr. and having the opportunity to work with the original parts, developing a singing and trumpet showcase for cruises, and undertaking a joint concert with Bobby Shew at the Concord Club, saying: "It was amazing to be standing on stage with one of my heroes." She is currently looking forward to sharing a stage with Sandoval

# Centre Story

at the ITG opening concert, representing Great Britain amidst a global gathering of world class players.

**Andrea Giuffredi** is an Italian trumpet soloist of international reputation and looking at his website, the owner of a wealth of fabulous jackets. Now in his early fifties, he began playing at nine years old through the encouragement of his father and grandfather, who were huge music fans. Andrea was attracted to playing the trumpet because his father had an LP of Perez Prado and his Orchestra and like many small children became hooked on a favourite track - his was *Quien Sera* as "the trumpet soloist made a beautiful sunny sound."

For those similarly not in the know, Perez Prado was a Cuban-Mexican bandleader and composer of *Mambo No. 5*. Many greats came through his band and if you're having a bad day whilst reading this, I recommend YouTubeing some of his work. Perez produced some seriously tight mambos, and as he frequently included Hammond organ and considerable dancing on stage, you might find a dull day suddenly a bit cheerier.

Andrea and his brother were lucky enough to live in an area with a great band and so he learnt music with a local bandmaster (a violinist) who taught them about all of the instruments. After that year he joined the Music Conservatoire of Parma.





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I asked Andrea to talk about his inspirational teachers: "At the conservatoire I studied with an excellent teacher of trombone, who made me do many exercises that gave me an excellent embouchure and lip vibration." As a youngster in Italy, few people knew of the American trumpet methods (Stamp, Clarke and Colin etc.) and his teacher Maurizio Mineo was one of the first to bring these methods to Italy. Andrea went on to study with Franco Titani at the Conservatoire of Piacenza, and had lessons with Pierre Thibault - the latter was a huge motivator for him. In the UK we have been appointing some fantastic fairly young brass musicians to top orchestral posts over the last few years; however Andrea was just 16 when got his first professional post with the trumpet section of the RAI (Italian National Television) Symphony Orchestra in Milan.

I asked Andrea about how he developed his sound as a soloist: "At the end of the 1980s I went to Chicago because I was curious about the famous school of brass. I took lessons from Vincent Chicowicz." Chicowicz was a trumpet player with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and prolific teacher at Northwestern - he encouraged students to 'flow the air' and 'release, not push' which helped Andrea to play in a less contrived and muscular way. Andrea talked about an interesting idea of 'imprinting a concept of a sound' on a student, where a teacher plays in a particular way for a student to engage with, which is how his early tutor worked with him.

Having played for many years in an opera theatre orchestra in Italy, Andrea's musical thoughts became focussed on the melodies of the singers and he began to think that these would be fantastic performed on trumpet. Although classically trained, his heart and musical catalogue is made up of beautiful vocal melodies interpreted for trumpet. In being a soloist Andrea believes that "... having a certain naturalness on stage helps you to bring the public with you. One of my objectives when I perform is to make someone else feel good, and bring out as much emotion as I possibly can."

He has performed with the likes of Pavarotti, Morricone and Liza Minnelli, as well as having plenty of orchestral gigs such as performing from memory with the Taipei Symphony to an audience of 5000, and receiving a standing ovation and five

encores and performing in Kousiung to 15000 people in front of a large orchestra. Performances that still make him feel emotional today. It's really the audience reaction which Andrea lives for. "I'm a musician, who, onstage plays from the heart for the people, not for the judgement of critics." Andrea is, as always, looking forward to going to the ITG where he will be playing the *Suite for Giuffro* composed for him by Nunzio Ortolano. Over the next year or so he is also forming his own quartet (trumpet, accordion, cello and percussion) and will be touring China and hopefully Europe.

Our final interviewee is **Brian Evans** (Principal third trumpet/cornet - AOBO). I was waiting a few days for his stories and now I have them I don't know where to start with the five thousand words! I'd love to write them up properly, with other tales of musical lives and careers of brass players, but I shall do my best to extract 800 words of gold.

Brian is President of both the Australian Trumpet Guild and the International Trumpet Guild; he's proud of both, naturally, but is honoured to be the first non-North American president of the ITG ([www.trumpetguild.org](http://www.trumpetguild.org)). The ITG does not stand still and as well as the staple activities (journal, conferences, international competitions) they are looking to new projects, members and much more global representation in the coming years. Becoming involved in the ITG has given him a new musical life and enthusiasm for playing, returning to some solo work. Brian started music at seven with banjo and mandolin lessons, but his real musical roots are in brass bands. He took up tenor horn at 12, moving swiftly to cornet as his brother was lead and then to soprano cornet at 13, where he became inspired by the great players and the solo repertoire. The band was under the tutelage of the legendary tubist Chris Goodchild. Here Brian took many of his mantas to heart: "always sing through your instruments boys" and "fingertips on the valves". Later training and private lessons were a mixed bag of success and miserable failure; he spent a year studying with Arthur Stender.

Somehow Brian managed to fail his degree at Sydney University and instead auditioned for the Eastern Command Band in Sydney, serving for 14 months as a reservist, part of the trumpet trio, beginning to freelance and getting his first pit gig (Jesus Christ Superstar, a definite trial by fire). Although proud to say he "has served", the army band taught him what he didn't want for a career. He soon received a call from the ABC National Training Orchestra (NTO - an ensemble through which many famous musicians have graduated into enviable careers), which changed his life, working a 30 hour week on repertoire and concerts. Brian had finally found his university!



In 1975, he was offered a position with what is now known as the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, but was then the AETT Sydney Orchestra, playing for Opera Australian and The Australian Ballet. This was, of course, just eight years after he switched from tenor horn to cornet! One of his favourite memories of this time is: "Playing 1<sup>st</sup> under Mark Elder in the 1978 production of Wagner's *Mastersingers*. Working with Mark, I felt like he was conducting me personally, he was enormously supportive.... and his words have given me a boost that have lasted a lifetime." Colleagues can have a surprising impact on your work and Brian suggests that: "all through my career, my colleagues have been my teachers, whether they know it or not. I feel like I have 'stolen' so many excellent musical ideas from them! When you're surrounded by great musicians you can't help but be positively influenced by them!"

Of course life is never easy inside or outside of music. Brian and his wife lost their son on his final day of kindergarten in 1996, through a road traffic accident. He is now a keen road safety campaigner. Similar to Georgina, he too has survived cancer and is a pro singer. We talk a little of singing and its impact on playing: "I was totally hooked with voice lessons and gradually learned things like line, relaxation, breathing and so many other elements that might have been naturally in my playing, but of which I had not much concept." As with Giuffredi, Cichowicz's suggestions of flow and wonderful teaching have had a profound impression with "everything getting played as if it's one long note with the pitch is changing...." For a man that 'failed' university he has since been asked, as part of a very full career, to present lectures on 'A Singer's Approach to Trumpet Playing'. For Brian: "Music is communication - pure and simple, and I have finally come to a point where I imagine I have something to say and that I do want to say it!"