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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

WE, NOT ME: THE MUSICAL LIFE OF BOB CRANSHAW

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Arts

Seth Britton Lewis

College of Performing and Visual Arts  
School of Music  
Jazz Studies

May 2020

This Dissertation by: Seth Britton Lewis

Entitled: *We, Not Me: The Musical Life of Bob Cranshaw*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Arts in the College of Performing and Visual Arts in the School of Music, Program of Jazz Studies

Accepted by the Doctoral Committee

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Accepted by the Graduate School

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## ABSTRACT

Lewis, Seth Britton. *We, Not Me: The Musical Life of Bob Cranshaw*. Published Doctor of Arts dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, May 2020.

This study focuses on the career of Bob Cranshaw by examining his musical attributes and his leadership within the jazz community. Cranshaw's career exceeded sixty years and yielded more than 400 recordings with artists such as Sonny Rollins, Ella Fitzgerald, James Brown, Paul Simon, Rod Stewart, Dexter Gordon, and numerous others. His career is examined using recordings, interviews, articles, discographies, and other publications. Biographical information about Cranshaw's upbringing, education, military service, and family dynamic offers perspective on how he established himself as a professional bassist and clarifies certain important decisions regarding his work. A timeline of Cranshaw's career is constructed using discographies, articles, and interviews to show the development of his professional life. New interviews with Cranshaw, his colleagues, and his students further illuminate the range and scope of his work musically and non-musically. The identification of important events and key elements in Cranshaw's professional and personal life makes it possible to better understand how and why he achieved success. In so doing, this study recognizes Cranshaw's significant place in jazz history.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest thanks go to Bob Cranshaw, who changed my life, and, so many other lives with his music and spirit. Also, thanks to my family and friends for their support and encouragement throughout the process working on this project. Thanks to the faculty and staff at the University of Northern Colorado for allowing me to work on this subject, which is so important to me. Thanks to all of the people who shared their time and memories of Bob Cranshaw, without which, this project would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

**Purpose**

Bob Cranshaw is among the most recorded bassists in jazz history. His credits include more than 400 jazz albums<sup>1</sup> as well as numerous recordings in other genres,<sup>2</sup> including film and television soundtracks.<sup>3</sup> Cranshaw was an active member of the jazz scene in Chicago and New York in the 1950s, and he performed and recorded with many influential jazz artists until his death in 2016. Cranshaw's body of recorded music contains several of the most significant jazz albums of all time, including Sonny Rollins' *The Bridge*. Cranshaw's work with Rollins spanned more than sixty years: beginning in 1959 until Rollins' retirement from performance in 2014. During their time together Rollins and Cranshaw played hundreds of live performances and made dozens of recordings.<sup>4</sup>

Cranshaw also played on several other important and influential jazz albums including Lee Morgan's *The Sidewinder*, Joe Henderson's *Inner Urge*, and Horace

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<sup>1</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw," <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=249>, accessed 28 August 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography," <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/bob-cranshaw-mn0000065862/credits>, accessed 8 October 2019.

<sup>3</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*, (accessed 23 February 2020), <https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/ahas/jots-search?view=thumbnail&query=bob+cranshaw&submit=GO&field=all>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Silver's *The Cape Verdean Blues*.<sup>5</sup> Much of the repertoire from these and other albums on which Cranshaw performed has been studied by bassists around the world, and Cranshaw's bass lines are considered to be essential components of the recordings. Cranshaw improvised many of these iconic bass lines during the recording sessions. Since the lines were Cranshaw's creations, he not only contributed to these albums as a performer, but also as a composer. A good example of this is Lee Morgan's "The Sidewinder," from the album of the same title. Morgan asked Cranshaw to play an introduction to the song,<sup>6</sup> and the bass line that Cranshaw created helped the album become the most successful record in Blue Note history.<sup>7</sup> There are numerous other examples of Cranshaw's improvised contributions to recordings presented throughout this study.

Clearly, Cranshaw's body of work has merit, but neither his life nor his musical output have ever been the subject of a thorough study. Though many sources of information about his life exist, those that are available are widely scattered. Most of the information about Cranshaw can be found in personal interviews. Fortunately, he was generous throughout his long career, especially in his later years, and granted numerous requests for interviews. In these published interviews (in various publications, album reviews, and liner notes) there is a wealth of information about his life and career. It is possible to assemble a chronological biographical study by combining these sources.

Many sources also contain information about Cranshaw from third parties,

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Brett Primack, "Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and The Sidewinder" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMtvXd6TKUw> accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Sidewinder: RVG Edition*. CD Blue Note Records CDP7-84157-2, 1999.

including album reviews, liner notes, and interviews with people familiar with Cranshaw. Though there is a great deal to learn from the interviews contained in these sources, information about Cranshaw has never been unified into a single, cohesive source. Since Cranshaw passed away on November 2, 2016, it is no longer possible to gain firsthand knowledge from him, but many of his colleagues, friends, and bandmates are still living. By conducting new interviews with people who had close personal and professional relationships with him, additional information can be learned from their anecdotal recollections.

Another important aspect of Cranshaw's career was his role in bringing the electric bass to prominence in jazz. Though Cranshaw began his career playing upright bass, he played electric bass more and more frequently throughout the 1960s<sup>8</sup> and was eventually forced to switch almost exclusively to electric bass due to an injury in the early 1970s.<sup>9</sup> Cranshaw's early adoption of electric bass helped to legitimize the instrument in a jazz context due to his status as a respected jazz musician.

Cranshaw first played the electric bass in the 1950s,<sup>10</sup> and began to play electric on jazz recordings in 1965.<sup>11</sup> By the late 1960s, Cranshaw had recorded electric bass regularly on jazz sessions for Blue Note, Verve, Impulse, Atlantic, Milestone, and others. He also played electric bass on pop records, film soundtracks, and television shows.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>9</sup> Birnbaum, "Electric Flashback: Bassists Bob Cranshaw & Steve Swallow Celebrate their Plugged-In Ways," 26-29.

<sup>10</sup> Larry Birnbaum, "Electric Flashback: Bassists Bob Cranshaw & Steve Swallow Celebrate their Plugged-In Ways," *Downbeat*, September 1997, 26-29.

<sup>11</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>12</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

Around this time Cranshaw considered the electric bass his main instrument,<sup>13</sup> though he continued to play both upright and electric bass on sessions for his entire career.<sup>14</sup> By playing electric bass with some of the biggest names in jazz (including Sonny Rollins, Bobby Timmons, Johnny Hodges, Jimmy Smith, Yusef Lateef, Horace Silver, James Moody, Kenny Barron, Oliver Nelson, Clark Terry, Stanley Turrentine, Errol Garner, Dexter Gordon, Dizzy Gillespie, and others), Cranshaw helped to normalize the presence of the instrument in a jazz context. Cranshaw deserves recognition for his role as one of the pioneers of electric bass that helped to establish its place in jazz.

Cranshaw also made a transition into studio work outside of jazz, and many highly respected bassists cite him as a major influence. While Cranshaw is best known for his contributions to the jazz canon, a thorough study of his career must also mention some of his other achievements. Several notable non-jazz artists Cranshaw collaborated with include Paul Simon, Barry Manilow, Eddie Kendricks, Judy Collins, Rod Stewart, Stevie Wonder, Eric Clapton, Dolly Parton, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, and Debbie Gibson.<sup>15</sup> Cranshaw also worked as a pit musician for the Broadway productions of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music*, and *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*.<sup>1617</sup>

Cranshaw also worked extensively on television shows and played bass in the band for *The Merv Griffin Show*, *The Dick Cavett Show*, *The David Frost Show*, the

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<sup>13</sup> Chris Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" *Bass Player*, October 1996, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>15</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography." <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/bob-cranshaw-mn0000065862/credits> accessed 8 October 2019.

<sup>16</sup> Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 30-36.

<sup>17</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

original cast of *Saturday Night Live* and the Children's Television Workshop production studio, which produced *Sesame Street*, *The Electric Company*, and *321 Contact*.<sup>18</sup>

Cranshaw played in the orchestras for several film soundtracks including *A Man Called Adam*,<sup>19</sup> *E.T.*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Prelude to a Kiss*,<sup>20</sup> *The Pawnbroker*,<sup>21</sup> and *The Anderson Tapes*.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to his musical accomplishments, Cranshaw established himself as a leader in his community. He followed the example set by Milt Hinton and mentored numerous young musicians throughout his life.<sup>23</sup> The best example of his mentorship is his relationship with bassist Tom Barney. After the death of Barney's biological father, who was also a bassist,<sup>24</sup> Cranshaw became a surrogate father and guided Barney's career for decades.<sup>25</sup> Other highlights include his work with the New York Musicians Union Local 802. Cranshaw's interaction with the Union had a rocky start,<sup>26</sup> and as a result he became involved with the union leadership to help include jazz artists. He also helped jazz artists understand how union membership could benefit them.<sup>27</sup>

Cranshaw's role at the union expanded over several decades. He began as a volunteer and his role gradually evolved; he acted as a jazz consultant, then served on the

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<sup>18</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*.

<sup>19</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>20</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>21</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>22</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>23</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<https://ethaniverson.com/interviews/interview-with-bob-cranshaw/>, accessed 22 August 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 30-36.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

<sup>27</sup> Todd Bryant Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul" *Allegro*, December 2012, <https://www.local802afm.org/allegro/articles/bob-cranshaws-heart-and-soul/> accessed 21 September 2019.

jazz advisory committee, and eventually became a member of the executive board in 2012.<sup>28</sup> Cranshaw joined the Jazz Foundation of America near its inception in 1990, and remained an active member for more than twenty-five years.<sup>29</sup> He continued to perform, record, and work into his eighties at both the Local 802 and The Jazz Foundation of America until he suffered a recurrence of prostate cancer, just months before his death.<sup>30</sup>

By closely examining Cranshaw's life in both personal and musical contexts, this study seeks to answer one overarching question and several related questions:

- Q1 What is Cranshaw's life story?
- Q2 How did Cranshaw become an important musical figure?
- Q3 What factors contributed to Cranshaw's success?
- Q4 How did Cranshaw gain the skills that helped achieve his success?
- Q5 What events shaped his career?
- Q6 What significant characteristics define Cranshaw's style?
- Q7 Who were his influences or mentors?
- Q8 What distinguishes Cranshaw from other jazz bassists?
- Q9 What non-musical traits were intrinsic to his success?
- Q10 What can be learned from Cranshaw's success and his methods?
- Q11 What elements of Cranshaw's approach could be adopted by others?

### **Need for Study**

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<sup>28</sup> Todd Bryant Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul"

<sup>29</sup> Anonymous, "The Jazz Foundation Story," <https://jazzfoundation.org/jazz-foundation-story/> accessed 4 October 2019.

<sup>30</sup> Todd Bryant Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's, Jazz Superhero" *Allegro*, December 2016. <https://www.local802afm.org/allegro/articles/bob-cranshaw-jazz-superhero-1932-2016/>, accessed 15 November 2019.

Cranshaw led a truly remarkable life, both in and out of music. Generations of jazz listeners and students have referred to Cranshaw's body of work as a definitive source of jazz bass playing. Given the long-term appeal of many of the recordings that Cranshaw made, his influence is likely to continue. This study seeks to provide perspective on how Cranshaw made his music by examining his life, musical evolution, and professional relationships. This study also uses historical information such as interviews, published articles, discographies, and liner notes to provide insight into important musical and non-musical events in his life and how they shaped his career. Cranshaw's achievements in music and his broad range of activities, which developed as he shifted into different roles and contexts within the music industry, clearly demonstrate that he is worthy of further study.

Multiple databases which list dissertations, theses, articles, and other scholarly research papers, were consulted in the search for information on Cranshaw. One relevant study is a Master of Arts thesis authored by Tony Lannen, who studied with Cranshaw. Lannen's thesis utilizes a variety of methods to describe Cranshaw's life and career, although it focuses on musical analysis. This study contains limited biographical information and does not examine the totality of Cranshaw's recorded output. Lannen's work does include several complete, unedited interviews with Cranshaw, Harold Mabern and Willie Thomas.<sup>31</sup> These interviews provide valuable sources of information; however, the study does not include a thorough review of literature or a detailed bibliography, and it therefore leaves several aspects of his life and career unaddressed. This thesis is the only existing scholarly work that addresses Cranshaw specifically.

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<sup>31</sup> Anthony Joseph Lannen, "Bob Cranshaw" (M.A. Thesis, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2016)

Other scholarly research papers address topics specific to jazz bassists and to jazz bass playing, but none have focused on Cranshaw. Several of these studies mention Cranshaw peripherally, and he provided interviews to the authors in two instances. Similar studies addressing individual bassists provide useful research style and formatting references; however, these studies focus on the playing styles of their subjects and are not biographical in nature. No additional studies focus on Cranshaw, and none contain detailed information about his life or career.

Other studies of bass players can serve as models of biographical study. These studies are published books, and they do not qualify as scholarly research. These works include *Bass Line: The Stories and Photographs of Milt Hinton*,<sup>32</sup> *Bassically Speaking: An Oral History of George Duvivier*,<sup>33</sup> *Pops Foster: The Autobiography of a New Orleans Jazzman*,<sup>34</sup> *Mr. P.C. The Life and Music of Paul Chambers*,<sup>35</sup> and *Ron Carter: Finding the Right Notes*.<sup>36</sup> These studies, with the exception of the Chambers biography, were produced in collaboration with their subjects; although none are strictly autobiographical in nature as they involve co-authors and contain numerous interviews.

These works were examined and considered as potential models for this study since the subject matter and research methods (a focus on interviews) are quite similar. The Hinton and Duvivier books are co-authored autobiographical works written in the

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<sup>32</sup> Milt Hinton and David G. Berger, *Bass Line: The Stories and Photographs of Milt Hinton* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).

<sup>33</sup> Edward Berger, *Bassically Speaking: An Oral History of George Duvivier* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1993).

<sup>34</sup> Tom Stoddard, Ross Russell and Brian Rust, *Pops Foster: The Autobiography of a New Orleans Jazzman*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971).

<sup>35</sup> Robert Palmer, *Mr. P.C. The Life and Music of Paul Chambers*, (Bristol, CT: Equinox Publishing, 2012).

<sup>36</sup> Dan Oulette, *Ron Carter: Finding the Right Notes* (Artist Share, 2008).



first-person perspective, in the style of an oral history. While these works are valuable, they do not employ the format of scholarly work. The Carter biography is not exclusively an oral history, but it does contain numerous interviews with Carter and his associates. Aside from the interviews, it does not utilize many other sources.

The Chambers study is the only example that was completed after the subject had died. As a result, the author Robert Palmer conducted a comprehensive review of numerous existing sources. In the introduction to his work, he states the necessity of cataloging the sources utilized for a work of this kind.<sup>37</sup> Palmer's study is constructed by following a discography of Chambers' recordings, and by using the discographical timeline to trace his life and work. Other sources include reviews of Chambers' recordings, live performances, and interviews with Chambers' living contemporaries. This model seems most applicable and relevant to this study since Cranshaw passed away in 2016, and his recorded output is well documented. The majority of Cranshaw's recordings are accessible, and many of his contemporaries are living and granted interviews for this study.

### **Scope and Limitations**

The available, relevant sources provide great detail about certain aspects of Cranshaw's career: discographies contain information about recordings and musical associations; interviews, reviews, and liner notes contain specific details about their subjects. Cranshaw's career spanned multiple decades; therefore, numerous sources exist. Every effort was made to examine these sources to find relevant details about his career.

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<sup>37</sup> Palmer, *Mr. P.C. The Life and Music of Paul Chambers*.

In addition to these sources, new interviews with Cranshaw's associates provide supplemental information. New interviews are limited to public figures, in accordance with Institutional Review Board regulations which govern research on human subjects. Despite this limitation, more than twenty individuals agreed to be interviewed for this study. Certain details about Cranshaw's personal and family life may be omitted out of respect for the privacy of non-public figures within his family. Given the high volume of Cranshaw's recordings and the length of his career, it is not feasible to combine a thorough biographical profile and a comprehensive musical analysis in a single study. Therefore, this study examines Cranshaw's musical output, but does not include analysis of Cranshaw's playing.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED MEDIA

Cranshaw died at eighty-three years old, and his musical career spanned the majority of his life as he recorded from 1957 to 2016.<sup>38</sup> Much has been published about Cranshaw during his long career in relation to the recordings he appeared on, the artists he collaborated with, and his personal journey as an artist. In addition to these published sources he also granted interviews to other non-print sources. These sources are essential tools for understanding Cranshaw's life and career. Cranshaw's body of work and his development can be better understood by collating information from these individual resources into a single, unified study.

Sources of particular interest and relevance include

- Dissertations and other academic works
- Interviews and articles in music publications
- Other interviews
- Overview sources
- Recordings and Liner Notes

#### **Dissertations and Other Academic Works**

Anthony Lannen's M.A. thesis, "Bob Cranshaw," is a useful primary source for

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<sup>38</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

interviews with Cranshaw and several of his contemporaries.<sup>39</sup> The majority of Lannen's work relies on a series of personal interviews. These interviews provide an important resource, but the study lacks alternative sources. Lannen's study also focuses on analysis of Cranshaw's playing style which is not relevant to this study. Lannen's study is particularly valuable for the several complete interviews included in the body of work. The full interviews include Cranshaw, Harold Mabern, and Willie Thomas (from the MJT+3). This is fortunate, as the interview subjects have all passed away since Lannen's interviews. There are also interview excerpts throughout the document that are not included in the complete interviews found in the appendices. Lannen was familiar with Cranshaw's career and much of the information found in the interviews is insightful.

Other published academic works that directly discuss or involve references to Cranshaw include

- Dave Schroeder, *The Evolving Role of the Electric Bass in Jazz: History and Pedagogy* (DMA Essay, University of Miami, 2001)<sup>40</sup>
- Brian Laclair, *An Exploration of Jim Hall's Guitar Stylings on the Album "The Bridge" by Sonny Rollins* (DMA Diss., Five Towns College, 2015)<sup>41</sup>
- Joel Harris, *Joe Henderson: A Biographical Study of his Life and Career* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2016)<sup>42</sup>
- Teague Stefen Bechtel, *Grant Green: An Analysis of the Blue Note Guitarist's*

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<sup>39</sup>Anthony Joseph Lannen, "Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>40</sup> Dave Schroeder, *The Evolving Role of the Electric Bass in Jazz: History and Pedagogy* (DMA Essay, University of Miami, 2001)

<sup>41</sup> Brian Laclair, *An Exploration of Jim Hall's Guitar Stylings on the Album "The Bridge" by Sonny Rollins* (DMA Diss., Five Towns College, 2015)

<sup>42</sup> Joel Harris, *Joe Henderson: A Biographical Study of his Life and Career* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2016)

*Musical Vocabulary* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2018)<sup>43</sup>

Though none of these studies focus specifically on Cranshaw, they reference Cranshaw's sideman recordings and other events in his career. Topics from these studies include Cranshaw's role in the development of the electric bass as a jazz instrument, and the album *The Bridge*. Studies of Joe Henderson and Grant Green, who both frequently collaborated with Cranshaw, prominently feature the bassist. These figures were significant in Cranshaw's professional life, and each study offers insight into their specific topics and Cranshaw's relevant involvement. The references in these documents also include valuable source material.

Cranshaw also provided interviews to the authors of two studies. In the Dave Schroeder study of electric bass, the author discusses Cranshaw several times and features one quotation from an original interview.<sup>44</sup> The study of *The Bridge* is valuable because it includes complete, original interviews with both Cranshaw and Jim Hall.<sup>45</sup> These are particularly important as *The Bridge* was the first major recording that Cranshaw played on, and is one of the most enduringly successful. It was also his first of many recordings with Rollins. Both Cranshaw and Hall have died since the interviews were recorded.

### **Interviews and Articles in Music Publications**

Cranshaw conducted many interviews in a variety of outlets including *Downbeat*, *Musician*, *Bass Player*, *Jazz Times*, *Allegro* (the magazine of Musicians Union Local

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<sup>43</sup> Teague Stefen Bechtel, *Grant Green: An Analysis of the Blue Note Guitarist's Musical Vocabulary* (D.A. Diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2018)

<sup>44</sup> Schroeder, *The Evolving Role of the Electric Bass in Jazz: History and Pedagogy*, 40.

<sup>45</sup> Laclair, *An Exploration of Jim Hall's Guitar Stylings on the Album "The Bridge" by Sonny Rollins*, 175-186.

802), *Jazziz*, *The Village Voice*, *The New York Times*, and other sources. Several of these sources are out of print; however, the University of Northern Colorado libraries contain many of the discontinued titles. The New York Musicians Union also maintains an archive of their magazine *Allegro* on the Local 802 website which has many articles relating to Cranshaw. Todd Weeks, the jazz representative at Local 802, worked closely with Cranshaw and wrote about him several times in *Allegro*. Many articles across these various publications cover similar topics, and their multiple viewpoints grant excellent perspective.

Prominent articles include

- “Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best” A 1997 interview with Chris Jisi of *Bass Player* magazine which discusses Cranshaw’s career and his mentorship of Tom Barney. This is an excellent source of information about Cranshaw’s mentorship and includes details about his career.<sup>46</sup>
- “Electric Flashback: Bassists Bob Cranshaw & Steve Swallow Celebrate their Plugged-In Ways” A 1997 interview with Cranshaw and electric bassist Steve Swallow in *Downbeat* magazine which covers the electric bass in jazz. Both musicians discuss their development on electric bass, the reasons they switched, and the reception they received on the new instrument.<sup>47</sup>
- “The Bottom Line: Bob Cranshaw, George Mraz & David Williams Bare the Soul of Jazz Bass” A 1996 round table discussion in *Musician* magazine with Cranshaw and bassists George Mraz and David Williams. Each describes their

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<sup>46</sup> Jisi, “Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best”

<sup>47</sup> Birnbaum, “Electric Flashback: Bassists Bob Cranshaw & Steve Swallow Celebrate their Plugged-In Ways”

entry into the jazz scene in New York and the important early associations that shaped their careers. As the eldest of the group, Cranshaw is featured heavily. He discusses his association with Milt Hinton and his initial involvement in the studio scene.<sup>48</sup>

- “Back to the Bridge” A 2005 *Downbeat* feature on Sonny Rollins’ classic recording *The Bridge*. Cranshaw is interviewed as well as Rollins, producer George Avakian, guitarist Jim Hall, and co-producer Bob Prince. The same topics are discussed separately with each interviewee and their responses can be compared. Cranshaw is featured extensively. This article contains many details about the session and Cranshaw’s tenure with Rollins.<sup>49</sup>
- “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul” A 2012 article in *Allegro* with Todd Weeks. The article discusses Cranshaw’s role within the Union and contains biographical information as well. It also features an interview with Cranshaw, with extended responses to several topics.<sup>50</sup>

There are also many published reviews of albums which feature Cranshaw. They serve not only as documents of the critical and commercial reception of a given album; they often also contain interesting details about the musicians or recordings not found in other sources.

### Other Interviews

Cranshaw gave additional extended interviews in an oral history style, and these

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<sup>48</sup> Karen Bennett, “The Bottom Line: Bob Cranshaw, George Mraz & David Williams Bare

the Soul of Jazz Bass.” *Musician*, June 1996, 34-37, 60.

<sup>49</sup> John McDonough, “Back to the Bridge.” *Downbeat*, September 2005, 32-34, 36-38.

<sup>50</sup> “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul”

are available from a number of sources. It is important to distinguish this type of interview from shorter, edited interview sources for two reasons. First, these interviews are not published in print sources; they are available through digital archives, blogs, personal websites, YouTube, and other sources. Second, the format of these interviews is conversational; they do not exclusively utilize pointed questions in the manner of a formal interview, which would usually focus on a particular topic. These interviews are unedited and are generally lengthier than interviews found in traditional print sources. As a result of the format, these interviews cover a broad range of topics and candid opinions. Despite their non-traditional nature, these interviews provide extremely insightful and valuable perspectives.

Interviews include

- “Interview with Bob Cranshaw” by Ethan Iverson for his blog *Do the M@th*.<sup>51</sup>
- “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw” by Michael Woods for the Hamilton College Jazz Archive.<sup>52</sup>
- “Bob Cranshaw” M.A. thesis by Tony Lannen. Includes complete interviews with Cranshaw.<sup>53</sup>
- Interviews with Brett Primack for his *Jazz Video Guy* YouTube channel.

Cranshaw gave four interviews to Primack which referenced *The*

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<sup>51</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>52</sup> Michael Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw” <http://contentdm6.hamilton.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/jazz/id/747/rec/25> (1995/2003), accessed 3 October 2019.

<sup>53</sup> Lannen, “Bob Cranshaw”



*Sidewinder*,<sup>54</sup> playing bass with Sonny Rollins,<sup>55</sup> the history of his upright bass,<sup>56</sup> and his feelings on playing in the “pocket”.<sup>57</sup>

- An interview with John Hammond at the 2013 Jazz Education Network Conference in Atlanta.<sup>58</sup>

### Overview Sources

Several overview sources provided background information about Cranshaw and his career. These sources were generally a starting point and were used to establish what could be considered common knowledge as they are widely available. Interestingly, the Leonard Feather collection, *Jazz in the Sixties*, is the only source that has not been updated since its first edition. It contains information from the original period, without any historical revision.

Notable overview sources include

- *Oxford Music Online* provided background information on Cranshaw, individuals related to Cranshaw, and topics that pertain to his career.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Brett Primack, “Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and The Sidewinder” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMtvXd6TKUw> accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>55</sup> Brett Primack, “Playing Bass with Sonny Rollins” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Rool5bzSmE&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP\\_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=7&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Rool5bzSmE&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=7&t=0s) accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>56</sup> Primack, Brett. “Bob Cranshaw’s Upright Bass” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX6BhvatEeY&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP\\_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uX6BhvatEeY&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=5) accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>57</sup> Brett Primack, “Bob Cranshaw - In The Pocket” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKIeRE0vKFo&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP\\_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=2&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKIeRE0vKFo&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=2&t=0s) accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>58</sup> John Hammond “Bob Cranshaw Interview with Jon Hammond at JEN 2013” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckhvUE4Pis4&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP\\_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=4&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckhvUE4Pis4&list=PLnLLCjkseRFZQgYP_SPgiY9oi0RC4supg&index=4&t=0s) accessed 27 September 2019.

<sup>59</sup> Lawrence Koch, and Barry Kernfeld. "Cranshaw, Bob." *Grove Music Online*. 2003; <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-2000105200>. Accessed 28 Aug. 2019.

- Leonard Feather's *Jazz in the Sixties* is a collection of short descriptions of leading jazz figures in the 1960s. Cranshaw's profile contains information about his career to that point and biographical information.<sup>60</sup>
- *Blue Note Records: Uncompromising Expression* is a chronological compendium of Blue Note releases and includes information on a selection of Blue Note sessions in which Cranshaw participated.<sup>61</sup>

### Recordings and Liner Notes

The recordings Cranshaw made throughout his career help to construct a timeline of his professional associations. The Tom Lord Discography is extremely comprehensive in the genre of jazz and contains session information including dates, personnel, track listings, number of takes, and locations. The Lord Discography is an excellent source, but it does not include recordings from other genres besides jazz. To supplement the Lord discography, AllMusic.com and the *Jazz On The Screen* database by David Meeker list Cranshaw's credits in jazz as well as other genres of music, film, television,<sup>62</sup> and production.<sup>63</sup> These sources are quite comprehensive but are not as detailed as the Lord discography, particularly in terms of dates, personnel, and locations.

The recordings Cranshaw made usually include liner notes. These notes were written by jazz critics, producers, musicians, authors, and journalists. Many of the preeminent figures in jazz, such as Ira Gitler, Nat Hentoff, Leonard Feather, Dan

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<sup>60</sup> Leonard Feather, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties* (New York: Horizon Press, 1966), 101.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Havers, *Blue Note Records: Uncompromising Expression* San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2014.

<sup>62</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*.

<sup>63</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography"

Morgenstern, Cannonball Adderley, Billy Taylor, George Avakian, Bob Theile, Duke Pearson, and many others, wrote notes for albums that Cranshaw recorded. Liner notes are valuable sources of information which occasionally include interviews with the musicians who played on the albums. They often contain information about the session, the musicians, and circumstances surrounding the recording: details that are often unavailable in other sources. In several instances, liner notes contain interviews with Cranshaw and/or the other musicians that played on the recordings. Many of Cranshaw's recordings have also been re-released on CD or in collections of multiple recordings from one artist. In these cases, the original liner notes are usually included alongside the notes written for the subsequent release. The notes for later releases contain relevant contemporary perspectives on the music and musicians on each album.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

This study seeks to bring together existing sources of information about Bob Cranshaw in conjunction with newly conducted interviews to create a comprehensive, historical record of his life and career. Several sources were key in building a timeline of Cranshaw's life: primarily the Tom Lord Jazz Discography (TJD). The TJD lists recordings chronologically, and the information about each recording includes personnel, dates, locations, number of takes (including alternate and unissued takes), and reissues. The TJD essentially catalogs many of Cranshaw's connections to other musicians in the jazz community. By comprehensively reviewing Lord and finding related sources including reviews, liner notes, and interviews, it is possible to construct a picture of these events and how they unfolded.

Using available resources in conjunction with personal knowledge of Cranshaw (which I gained over eight years of study with him), his associates, and friends, I assembled a concise list of people with whom to conduct additional interviews. I was able to gain firsthand knowledge of Cranshaw and his professional activities as his student and friend from 2008 until his death in 2016; before his death I recorded a series of interviews in 2016. I also accompanied Cranshaw to many events over the time I knew him, including rehearsals, recording sessions, union meetings, live performances, doctor visits, interviews, and other tasks. The series of interviews that I recorded with Cranshaw

were made in his home and around New York in the final months of his life. Together, they are several hours long and cover a wide variety of topics. He was aware that I planned to engage in a study of his life, and the interviews are very candid as he was forthcoming with detailed information about his past. These interviews fill gaps in knowledge from existing sources about many events in his life and include many details not previously available in other sources.

To supplement the resources detailed in the literature review section and my interviews with Cranshaw in 2016, this study also includes interviews with people connected to various aspects Cranshaw's life. The individuals interviewed have unique perspectives on Cranshaw and provided additional information about different aspects of his life and career. Each subject included in the study was made aware of the purpose of the research and the way their interview would be used. Each subject consented to the use of their interview, and for their interview to be recorded for transcription. In November of 2019 I travelled to New York to conduct in-person interviews with many of the subjects, but in cases where live interviews were not feasible, interviews were conducted over the phone. Each subject was selected for their close work with Cranshaw and the interviews focused on the relationship that they shared. All of the interviewees that were contacted for this study are public figures, per Institutional Review Board guidelines regarding research on human subjects.<sup>64</sup>

The subjects that consented to the use of their interviews in the final study are listed and described briefly, to establish their status as public figures, and short explanations of their relationships with Cranshaw are included. An essential resource for

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<sup>64</sup> See appendix for full IRB documentation.

contacting these individuals is the AFofM Local 802 Union Member Directory. This volume publishes contact information for all members and was the primary means for connecting with interviewees.<sup>65</sup>

Interviewees include:

- Tom Barney, bassist with the *Lion King* on Broadway, *Saturday Night Live*, *Night Music*, *Steely Dan*,<sup>66</sup> Walter Bishop, Miles Davis, and many others.<sup>67</sup>

Cranshaw adopted Barney after his father died and became Barney's lifelong mentor and father figure.<sup>68</sup>

- John Lee, bassist and record producer of JLP Productions,<sup>69</sup> founder of the Giants of Jazz award,<sup>70</sup> bassist with Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Larry Coryell, McCoy Tyner, Nancy Wilson and others.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> American Federation of Musicians. Local 802, *Directory and Instrumentation Local no. 802, American Federation of Musicians, Associated Musicians of Greater New York.*, New York, Associated Musicians of Greater New York, 2014-2015.

<sup>66</sup> Anonymous, "Tom Barney: Credits" <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/tom-barney-mn0000930639/credits> accessed 20 November 2019.

<sup>67</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Tom Barney" <https://www.lordisco.com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=54830> accessed 20 November 2019.

<sup>68</sup> Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 30-36.

<sup>69</sup> Don Lucoff, "Bassist John Lee's New Jazz Label, 'Jazz Legacy Productions'" <https://news.allaboutjazz.com/bassist-john-lee-s-new-jazz-label-jazz-legacy-productions.php>. accessed 20 November 2019.

<sup>70</sup> Anonymous, "Giants of Jazz 22 Honors Life and Music of Harold Mabern" <https://www.broadwayworld.com/new-jersey/article/Giants-of-Jazz-22-Honors-Life-and-Music-of-Harold-Mabern-20191014>. accessed 20 November 2019.

<sup>71</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: John Lee" <https://www.lordisco.com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=1692> accessed 22 November 2019.

- Ron Carter legendary bassist with Miles Davis, Hank Jones, Joe Henderson, Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams<sup>72</sup> and Emeritus Professor at the City College of New York.<sup>73</sup>
- Roy McCurdy, drummer with Sonny Rollins, Cannonball Adderely, Betty Carter, Nancy Wilson, Benny Golson, Sarah Vaughn<sup>74</sup> and professor of drums at the University of Southern California.<sup>75</sup>
- Todd Weeks, New York Musicians Union Local 802 Principal Business Representative for Jazz and Hotel Steady Agreements.<sup>76</sup>
- Andy Schwartz, AFofM New York Musicians Union Local 802 Recording Vice President.<sup>77</sup>
- Mark Soskin pianist with Sonny Rollins, Billy Cobham, Herbie Mann, Bobby Watson<sup>78</sup> and professor at the Manhattan School of Music.<sup>79</sup>
- Jerome Harris bassist and guitarist with Sonny Rollins, Oliver Lake, George

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<sup>72</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Ron Carter” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=9> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>73</sup> Anonymous “History: Jazz Studies at City College,” <https://jazz.ccnysites.cuny.edu/history/> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>74</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Roy McCurdy” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2541> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>75</sup> Anonymous “Roy McCurdy” <https://music.usc.edu/roy-mccurdy/> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>76</sup> Anonymous, “Local 802 Leadership, Governance and Staff” <https://www.local802afm.org/leadership/> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Mark Soskin” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=609> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>79</sup> Anonymous, “Manhattan School of Music Faculty: Mark Soskin” <https://www.msmnyc.edu/faculty/mark-soskin/> accessed 22 November 2019.

Russel, Bill Frissell and Julius Hemphill.<sup>80</sup>

- Bobby Broom guitarist with Sonny Rollins, Stanley Turrentine, Kenny Burrell, Dizzy Gillespie, David Murray, Dr. John<sup>81</sup> and assistant professor at Northern Illinois University.<sup>82</sup>
- Joe Farnsworth, drummer with George Coleman, Pharaoh Sanders, Wynton Marsalis, Junior Cook, Benny Golson and many others.<sup>83</sup>
- Peter Bernstein, guitarist for Sonny Rollins, George, Jim Hall, Lou Donaldson, Lonnie Smith, Joshua Redman<sup>84</sup> and faculty member at The New School.<sup>85</sup>
- Mike LeDonne, pianist and organist for Clifford Jordan, Joshua Redman, James Moody, Milt Jackson, George Coleman, Benny Golson and many others.<sup>86</sup>
- John Webber, bassist for George Coleman, Etta Jones, Barry Harris, Hank Jones, Frank Wess, Junior Cook, Jimmy Cobb, Cecil Payne and many

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<sup>80</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Jerome Harris” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=4029> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>81</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Bobby Broom” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=5488> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>82</sup> Anonymous, “Northern Illinois University School of Music - Meet Us: Bobby Broom” <https://www.niu.edu/music/meet-us/bio/broom.shtml> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>83</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Joe Farnsworth” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=5484> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>84</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Peter Bernstein” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=5485> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>85</sup> Anonymous, “The New School Jazz Faculty: Peter Bernstein” <https://www.newschool.edu/jazz/faculty/peter-bernstein/> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>86</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Mike LeDonne” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=5498> accessed 22 November 2019.



others.<sup>87</sup>

- Harold Mabern, pianist for the MJT+3, Lee Morgan, Wes Montgomery, Lionel Hampton, Johnny Griffin, Art Farmer<sup>88</sup> and professor at William Paterson University.<sup>89</sup>
- Clifton Anderson, trombonist with Sonny Rollins, Robin Eubanks, Muhal Richard Abrams, The Art Ensemble of Chicago, Steve Turre, Geri Allen, Wallace Roney and others.<sup>90</sup>
- Steve Little, drummer for *The Skitch Henderson Show* and the Children's Television Workshop.<sup>91</sup>
- Roger Kellaway, pianist with the 100 Gold Fingers concert series, pianist and arranger on several jazz albums with Cranshaw starting in 1965.<sup>92</sup>
- Al Gafa, guitarist on several albums and played numerous live performances with Cranshaw starting in 1968.<sup>93</sup>
- Frank Owens, pianist and arranger on several albums and numerous live

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<sup>87</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: John Webber” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=5477> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>88</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Harold Mabern” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2975> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>89</sup> Anonymous, “William Paterson Department of Music: Jazz Studies and Performance Faculty” [https://www.wpunj.edu/coac/departments/music/faculty/faculty\\_jazz.html](https://www.wpunj.edu/coac/departments/music/faculty/faculty_jazz.html) accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>90</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Clifton Anderson” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=1228> accessed 22 November 2019.

<sup>91</sup> Anonymous, “Steve Little” <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/steve-little-mn0000147469/credits>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>92</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Roger Kellaway” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=27636> accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>93</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Al Gafa” <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=4686> accessed 22 March 2020.

performances with Cranshaw starting in 1966.<sup>94</sup>

- Peter Curtis, professor of guitar at Riverside Community College and Cranshaw's nephew.<sup>95</sup>

Prior to each interview a survey of each individual's background was completed that covered the following topics:

- Performance history, including live dates and recordings, between the interviewee and Cranshaw.
- Personal relationship between the interviewee and Cranshaw.
- The interviewee's musical background and recording credits.
- Specific questions for each interviewee.
- Each interviewee was also asked a universal set of questions:
  - Did Cranshaw have an impact on your life and career?
  - What made Cranshaw stand out musically and personally?
  - Is there anything you would like to add about your relationship with Cranshaw?

After conducting the interviews, the recordings were transcribed, and the text was included in relevant sections in the body of this study. Subjects whose interviews were used in the final document were given the opportunity to review their quotes. Each portion of an interview that was used in the study was approved by the interviewee before

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<sup>94</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Frank Owens" <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=12984> accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>95</sup> Anonymous, "Riverside Community College Jazz Faculty" <https://www.rcc.edu/departments/performingarts/music/jazz/Pages/Archive/faculty.aspx> accessed 22 March 2020.

inclusion and final publication.

CHAPTER IV  
BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

**Part I: 1932-1951**

Melbourne Robert (Bob) Cranshaw was born in Evanston, Illinois just outside of Chicago on December 10, 1932, to parents Evelyn (nee Brown) and Stanley Irvine Cranshaw.<sup>96</sup> His father, Stanley Irvine Cranshaw Sr., was born and raised in Kansas City, MO.<sup>97</sup> Stanley Cranshaw Sr. grew up playing drums, and he worked with Count Basie and travelled with a circus.<sup>98</sup> He eventually settled in Evanston, IL, where he met his future bride, Evelyn Brown. Evelyn Brown was of Madagascan heritage and Bob Cranshaw credited family genes from both parents for both his longevity and youthfulness.<sup>99</sup> “My father’s people are American Indian, so that probably contributed to my looking young – along with my mother’s Madagascan background.”<sup>100</sup> Evelyn Brown was born and raised in Evanston, and lived there for her entire life.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Also on Cranshaw’s birth certificate is a note that his mother Evelyn was kept in the hospital for a week following his birth and that they were discharged on December 10. The actual date of his birth may have been December 3, but his birthdate is officially recognized as December 10.

<sup>97</sup> Weeks, “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul”

<sup>98</sup> Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>99</sup> Weeks, “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul”

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

In addition to his work as a drummer, Stanley Cranshaw Sr. directed a choir for his church.<sup>102</sup> He also worked as an electrician in order to support his family.<sup>103</sup> Stanley Cranshaw Sr. and Evelyn Brown were married and had two boys, Stanley Jr. and Melbourne Robert, who went by Bob. They also adopted a third child, Gordon Emanuel, an orphan from a white Jewish family.<sup>104</sup> Gordon Emanuel later changed his name to Emanuel Cranshaw after his adoption and considered the Cranshaws to be his family.

This kind of racially mixed family was uncommon in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s; however, the Cranshaws were able to lead a relatively normal life due to prevailing attitudes of inclusion in the educated suburb of Evanston.

Evanston is a pretty wealthy community, black and white, because of Northwestern, so I came up in a really lovely neighborhood. As I tell guys, I can play the blues, but I can't cry the blues because I didn't come from that kind of thing. Chicago was a whole different thing. Evanston was a safe city – just a beautiful community – with Northwestern, right on Lake Michigan. It was just a gorgeous place.<sup>105</sup>

Evanston's racial integration, as well as Cranshaw's mother Evelyn, also instilled an attitude of determination and inclusion.

I was gonna make it, shit, I didn't give a fuck. I knew all the negative shit out there, but it didn't mean that much to me. I wasn't gonna let that stop me from doing my thing. I think my mother was like that. She was a teacher and boy; she had her shit together.<sup>106</sup>

In fact, Cranshaw remembered enjoying people's reactions to seeing his family.

We used to fuck with people. He was my brother, but people would look at us sitting together and think something was wrong seeing this white kid and black kid saying they were brothers. We used to laugh watching them try to figure it out.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>103</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul"

<sup>104</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 2 October 2016).

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw's musical exposure first came from his father, who in addition to being a drummer, was a church choir director. Cranshaw had memories of hearing the group.

I used to listen to the choir, and I wanted to be a part of it so bad. One of the things that stood out at the time with the choir was the bass singers. He had three or four guys that were bass and I enjoyed the sound, that deep roar.<sup>108</sup>

Thanks to his father's influence, Cranshaw sang in choirs; though he sang tenor, not bass.

Eventually, he went on to conduct choirs, like his father.<sup>109</sup>

... I liked choral music a lot. And in school and in high school and in college I was always involved in choirs and I wanted to kind of be a choir director. And my father was a choir director for the church, so I got a chance, I was always around music...<sup>110</sup>

All members of the Cranshaw family were musical; in Cranshaw's words, "Music was always there."<sup>111</sup> Initially, Bob Cranshaw's own musical interests were not in jazz. He was also exposed to early musical training thanks to their proximity to Northwestern University.

When I was three or four years old, my parents enrolled me in a program for special kids at Northwestern University. And I knew I could grab any instrument. I had a clarinet at home and within two weeks, I could play tunes on it. I had a bandilla-type guitar, same thing – 15, 20 minutes, I had it. Gone.<sup>112</sup>

Cranshaw played several instruments before he became a bassist. The first musical instrument for which he took lessons formally was piano, starting at the age of four.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul."

<sup>113</sup> Koch, Lawrence, and Barry Kernfeld. "Cranshaw, Bob." *Grove Music Online*. 2003; Accessed 22 Aug. 2019. <https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-2000105200>.

I started out playing piano, but I wouldn't read. I was studying and my teacher would play something, "This is what I want you to play next week." I heard it, so I'd go out and play baseball all week and come back and play the same thing she'd play because I had heard it... my piano teacher after two or three years went to my parents and said, "Look. There's no need for him to study with me because he's not reading anything. I play it, he hears it, and he plays." At that point, I just stopped the piano.<sup>114</sup>

He shifted his focus from piano to classical percussion at the age of nine.<sup>115</sup> Cranshaw discussed this topic in an interview with Ethan Iverson:

BC:...I wanted to be a classical percussionist. I wasn't really interested in jazz at all [laughs].

EI: What does classical percussion mean? Is that mallets and timpani?

BC: Timpani, yeah. I did all of that through junior high school and high school.<sup>116</sup>

Cranshaw's first memory of jazz was listening to the radio at home. Cranshaw specifically remembered gravitating toward the bass the first time he heard it:

Milt Hinton was one of the first bass players that I heard. This was before TV. I heard him on the radio. I think he was my biggest influence. When I heard him play, the shit was swinging so hard that the radio was about to jump off the table. I went to my father, and I said, "I want to play that."<sup>117</sup>

Eventually, Cranshaw's interest in drums and percussion faded because he did not want to compete with his father on the drum set.<sup>118</sup>

I'm really a percussionist. I started out wanting to be a concert percussionist. I was not really interested in jazz at all, but I wanted to be a classical percussionist. But my father was a drummer who grew up with Count Basie, grew up in Kansas City, so he goes back to the Count Basie early days, and... So, since my father was also a drummer, I figured there was no reason

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<sup>114</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence & Kernfeld, *Grove Music Online*

<sup>116</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul."

for me to buck, I just wanted to play anything. I wanted to play with the family. And since he was a drummer, I wasn't going to move him over; he was there first. So, I decided to play bass.<sup>119</sup>

Cranshaw began playing bass and tuba during high school and would later play tuba for parades in ROTC bands.<sup>120</sup> Cranshaw recalled his switch to bass being very natural:

... I just kind of started with the bass. One of my friends had a bass, so I would go to his house and just mess around... I think I was the sixth chair bassist (in high school). It was mainly a lot of girls in front of me, you know, the first chair and the second and third.<sup>121</sup>

Cranshaw did not consider the bass to be his main focus until a rehearsal when his high school orchestra director asked each bassist to play a passage by themselves.

I was still not sold on the bass, on really getting into it, but one day we had a sectional rehearsal with the bass, and it was a passage that the conductor wanted each one of us to play alone. I remember the first chair girl said, "You know, I'd rather work on it awhile." A couple of people tried it. By the time it got to me, I'd already heard it, so I played it!... So, again, by me playing by ear, ... I learned to read long after I could play, and it was harder for me to really read because I could hear it.<sup>122</sup>

The director moved Cranshaw up from the last chair in the bass section because of his natural ability to hear and play music. This was also one of the first experiences where Cranshaw became serious about playing bass. "So, he (the orchestra director) moved me up to the third spot. Now the challenge is on me, 'cause I've gotta be worthy of being in that third chair. I gotta produce."<sup>123</sup> Cranshaw's first bass was as a gift from the well-

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<sup>119</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>120</sup> Feather, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties*, 101.

<sup>121</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul."



known bassist Chubby Jackson, who was living in Chicago at the time. Cranshaw told *Bass Player*'s Chris Jisi, "Chubby lived in Chicago and gave me my first bass..."<sup>124</sup>

All of the Cranshaw siblings were musical and they were encouraged to play from a young age. They all chose different instruments: "I have a brother who is a pianist who is also in New York and worked briefly with Miles years ago. And I have a brother who is a vibist."<sup>125</sup> Elder brother Stanley Jr. was the pianist and the youngest; adopted brother Emmanuel was the vibraphonist. All three Cranshaw brothers would become professional musicians, though Stanley Jr. and Emmanuel would stay in Chicago. Emmanuel played with founding members of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music (AACM) and recorded with Muhal Richard Abrams. However, Cranshaw was especially influenced by his older brother Stanley Jr.<sup>126</sup>

My brother really was a student of the piano, so I got a chance to really listen a lot and they pushed me a lot... My brother would play things. My brother could play harmonically. He was incredible... My brother would play a chord and then I would play the root.<sup>127</sup>

In addition to hearing jazz on the radio at home, Cranshaw was exposed to a variety of music thanks to Stanley Jr.'s record collection and band, which rehearsed nearby.

My brother played with a band, so I would go and listen when they were rehearsing... It was jazz. Junior Mance is also from Evanston, and he's one of the few people that knew my brother well and really knew of his playing... This was in the early '50s, '40s. He could already play. I mean, he was great... they would be rehearsing and playing. I could just hear what he was doing. I knew because of listening to records, listening to Nat Cole. My brother was into Bud Powell, he loved that kind of thing, so I heard it.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best", 32.

<sup>125</sup> Feather, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties*, 101.

<sup>126</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Iverson, "Interview With Bob Cranshaw."

Unfortunately, Cranshaw observed his brother Stanley Jr.'s experimentation with drug use from an young age.

I would be out sitting on the porch. They wouldn't allow me to come inside because they're smoking weed and so forth, so they didn't really want me to see it.<sup>129</sup>

Later, Stanley Jr. became a heroin addict; Bob tried to help his brother any way that he could.

... he (Stanley Jr.) was a junkie. He was totally strung out. I used to try to hide it from my parents so I would follow him and collect all his roaches and eat them. Seeing him fucked up on heroin scared me to the point that I never tried it, even though so many of the guys I played with did at one time or another. One night after a gig I was coming home late, must have been 5:00 AM, and I found him nodded out on heroin. Right then I picked him up, put him in the car and took him to Lexington Hospital, left him at the gate and drove off!<sup>130</sup>

Stanley Jr.'s negative experiences turned Cranshaw off to hard drugs, especially heroin, which he never experimented with. Thanks to these early observations of the dark side of drug use, Cranshaw avoided the habit which affected many jazz musicians during this period.

Another formative event in Cranshaw's early bass experience was a state-wide high school solo bass contest, which his orchestra director encouraged him to enter.

The orchestra director challenged me and said, "Look. I want you to play. I want you to get some material together for the state bass contest." He gave me maybe two months or more. I said, "Okay, I'll do it," not thinking that I was going to really do it. One month went by and he said, "How are you doing on your tune?" I hadn't even started to work on shit. I went down to the music store and having no idea what I was doing, I picked a *Sonata in A Minor* by Marcello that had three movements. My teacher at Northwestern looked at it and said, "Wait a minute. I don't know whether you can play this. You have thumb position; you've got stuff here that you're nowhere near." I played it on the piano and learned the whole thing by playing and hearing it! Okay, so, I didn't really read it. I won the state

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

contest, but it was way over my head. Everything changed because the orchestra director really challenged me in that. When I won, I said, “I gotta stop bullshitting now. It’s been bullshit all the way. I’ve been able to get by by hearing it and then playing it. Now, I gotta learn to read. I gotta turn the equation around.” At that point, with my teacher at Northwestern, I started to get into it. I started to really devote some time to it.<sup>131</sup>

Cranshaw was awarded a scholarship to Bradley University for winning the bass contest; he attended for one semester after high school.<sup>132</sup>

During high school, Cranshaw was also an athlete who played linebacker for the football team. He specifically recalled competing against vocalist and brother of Nat “King” Cole, Freddie Cole (Cranshaw remembers losing that game). Cranshaw loved football, but eventually let it go at the suggestion of his orchestra director, in order to preserve his hands.

I wanted to play football. I was also a football player, and I was more interested. You know I wasn’t sure whether I liked bass or what was happening. But I started to think about what would happen to my hands first. That was one of the major things the orchestra director would say, “What about your hands? What if something happens to your hands?” And eventually he won out.<sup>133</sup>

While in high school, Cranshaw also learned other skills that proved useful later in his life. He had learned to type while in high school in Evanston, he also learned to treat other racial groups equally. His high school, like his family, was notable because it was integrated. Cranshaw remembered:

Everybody in Evanston went there (to one high school) and it was a brilliant school. It was large, but it was a wealthy school... I had the best. I came from a gorgeous high school, a brilliant high school that was like a college. It was a huge school.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

<sup>133</sup> Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

Thanks to the size and resources available, his school offered courses in many different subjects. Cranshaw took a broad range of classes, because he could associate with a more diverse group of classmates.

I was in the choir because the girls were in the choir. I learned to knit in high school because the girls were there! I didn't want to be with a bunch of guys all the time. So, I got involved in the things where the girls were.<sup>135</sup>

### **Military Service: 1952-1953**

At Bradley University, Cranshaw participated in the Army's Reserve Officer Training Program (ROTC). The commanding officer in Cranshaw's ROTC unit noticed his natural leadership abilities and recommended that he apply for an officer's candidate school, in order to pursue a career in the military. By this time Cranshaw was already thinking of pursuing music as his profession and knew that military service was not what he wanted for a career. Cranshaw declined to enter the officer's candidate school, but he had already committed to ROTC. He was faced with an ultimatum: either join the officer's candidate school or face disciplinary measures such as extra duties. Cranshaw did not understand why he would be punished for declining what his commanders considered to be a promotion. He declined both of these options and left the ROTC program.

... they told me "Well, you could come and work some of it off." They would have parades and different things that I could do. And I said, "Fuck it." You know, (laughs) I don't feel like doing that shit. I got the dishonorable discharge and in two months, I was gone.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

Leaving the ROTC program in this way earned Cranshaw a dishonorable discharge and set in motion a series of events that changed his life forever.<sup>137</sup> Cranshaw explained, “I went home after the semester and there was my (draft) papers.”<sup>138</sup>

In 1952, the United States was at war in Korea, and a draft was in effect for young men. After just one semester at Bradley, Cranshaw was drafted into the Army and was sent to fight in the Korean War. He speculated that as punishment for leaving the ROTC, he was not permitted to join a band unit, although he would play some tuba and bass on the return journey from Korea.<sup>139</sup> Instead, he was sent to fight on the front lines of the war. This was the first of several punitive disciplinary measures Cranshaw endured in the military.

He was given very short notice of his selection: “... they didn’t even give me two weeks.”<sup>140</sup> Cranshaw was sent to Camp Roberts in California for training.<sup>141</sup> This was the first time he had left home. “I just remember my parents and Emmanuel and Stanley, (saying) ‘Now you keep your money here!’ It was like I was a little baby; you know. In a protective way.”<sup>142</sup> Upon Cranshaw’s arrival at Camp Roberts, he was again approached to become an officer; however, he again declined, and punishments continued.

... when I got in the service, I qualified for officer candidate school. So, I fucked up again. Because there are sixteen weeks of infantry basic. I started in a company with three other guys and I don’t know what happened. They took us out and put us in a company that was just starting. So, by the time I got through with basic I had about twenty or twenty-two weeks of basic. I had enough of that shit. I went off. They didn’t leave me with the company that I was with to follow through with the sixteen weeks, so they put (me) with another company just starting so now I got through these sixteen weeks

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Leonard, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties*, 101.

<sup>140</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

and I'd already had about a month of basic. And I was pissed, now, I'm pissed! You talk about being pissed, now I'm pissed, but I'm still following the rules. I was a good soldier...<sup>143</sup>

During his service in Korea, Cranshaw was asked a third time to become a military officer. "They wanted to send me to officer candidate school while I was there 'cause I was so good with the troops."<sup>144</sup> Cranshaw again declined this offer.

I turned down being an officer. I said I would. And then when they gave me more time, I said "Fuck it, I ain't making this a career. This ain't my career. So, you guys got it. I don't give a shit what you do. I ain't going to no officer's candidate school. I don't give a shit. I'm a private, I'll leave here private, I don't have to be a captain but I ain't going through no more of this bullshit." And they said, "Ok, you'll pay" ... I didn't want to be a captain or a lieutenant to begin with. You know, that wasn't my thing. I was qualified to be there, but it wasn't something that I was (interested in) ... I didn't care.<sup>145</sup>

As punishment, Cranshaw was assigned to a unit that was comprised of soldiers with disciplinary cases.

Most of the guys in my company, Love Company, either had to go to jail or they had to go to the Army. So, most of the guys didn't give a shit. They said fuck it "I'm here but I'm gonna do what I feel like doing" ... Most of the guys, they were going to go to jail. We had a lot of New York guys. Their choice, they were either going to go to the Army, to Korea, or they were going to go to prison.<sup>146</sup>

Since Cranshaw's infractions were less severe than several of his fellow soldiers, he was assigned to lead the unit if the officers in charge were killed in battle.

... I was so good with the troops. The guys liked me, no problems. I went to a special study in Korea, a special class for a week in Korea, to run the company if all the officers were killed. I knew how to run (the company), I knew how to draw up a fight plan. I knew how to do the whole thing. I got it, I mean, I really got it. But all of the guys in the company liked me.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

Even though Cranshaw was well-liked, there remained challenges within the group of soldiers. Some, like Cranshaw himself, were unwilling to perform certain duties and others would not comply with any orders at all.

I just remember the youngest guy, Cato, I'll never forget him. Cato was about sixteen or seventeen, and Cato would say "I ain't doin' a shit eatin' thing." And we would just laugh. He wouldn't do a shit eatin' thing. He said he wasn't going to, so we didn't bother him. I mean it was ok. He wasn't going to fight, he wasn't going to do KP, he wasn't going to do shit. (he said) "Call me in my tent. That's where you'll find me. 'Cause I'm not doing a fuckin' thing." But he was so young, we didn't think about it. We just said, "Here's a young guy."<sup>148</sup>

Cranshaw was primarily a machine gun operator, and he was assigned to a three-man team that included an ammunition bearer/Korean translator and someone who carried the machine gun stand. Cranshaw had recently finished high school and was strong from playing football, so he instructed the third member to "forget the stand"<sup>149</sup> (he could manage the weight of the gun without the stand) and carry more ammunition.<sup>150</sup> One of the most poignant memories Cranshaw recalled from this conflict was being on patrol when a mortar shell landed just behind him, killing the translator in their three person team. Cranshaw would later name his first son Kim after his fallen comrade.<sup>151</sup>

The Korean conflict was violent and Cranshaw was in combat for almost a year. Cranshaw remembered the difficulty of the war.

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

I was there for over a year and because of having been in combat they only let you stay in combat for so long. But at that time, during the Korean war, you would be on-line, you would be fighting for maybe a year and they would take you for R & R or they'd let you out early cause they've already destroyed your life. So, it's rough. A lot of the guys, I just think about the guys who didn't make it.<sup>152</sup>

Cranshaw regretted the events of the war and his part in them.

I'm hurt about having to kill people. That's why Memorial Day is bad for me. 'Cause it was a drag. The sad thing is, I don't know why. They didn't give me a reason. But I feel bad. I don't have many regrets, but that's one. That, (the war) it didn't make sense to me... and being a machine gunner. I probably hurt a lot of people... I was out of character... I could just cry... I (could) see what's going on and it was just senseless. I mean for no reason; we were fighting for no reason. I know I was doing a job, but I know I hurt a lot of people. I know I blew up a lot of homes. And I was a machine gunner and it wasn't pleasant.<sup>153</sup>

The war ended while Cranshaw was in the field. As suddenly as he had found himself in Korea, he was ordered back to base.

Now at the time, the war was kinda slacking down. I'm trying to think where I was when they announced, 'cause we didn't hear about it for probably awhile, that the war was over. We didn't know. We're still fighting.

Despite the hardships of fighting on foreign soil, Cranshaw laughed when remembering some of the events at the end of the war.

You know and once we heard it, (that the war was over) we're out in this field, but we got all this ammunition. So, we ain't gonna carry it all back, so we just started to fire, but we were not firing at anybody. I wasn't carrying shit back. I said "Motherfucker, you can forget it. I ain't carrying a motherfuckin' thing back." If you lookin' for me to carry something, I'm getting rid of all of my shit.

During the return process Cranshaw also "lost" his machine gun during a treacherous river crossing.

You know, now, I lost one machine gun. I couldn't swim and we're crossing a river on a rubber thing (inflatable raft) and it tilted so my machine gun

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.



was already gone. (laughs) And they're bitching. "Well, we're gonna fine you." Fuck you! I'm out of here. I don't give a shit what you do. This shit is over for me.<sup>154</sup>

Another notable event after the end of the fighting was an altercation Cranshaw had with his commanding officer over the distribution of duties among the troops. One evening at dinner Cranshaw was one of the first in line to eat among a large group of hungry soldiers. His commanding officer entered and ordered Cranshaw to serve food to the troops. According to Cranshaw, it was also because he was black.<sup>155</sup> Cranshaw argued that since he was at the front of the line, one of the people at the back should serve because they would have to wait for their food anyway. Neither would budge and the argument quickly escalated to blows.

It was the end of the war. Everybody's tired, everybody. And usually you got in line to eat. It was a long line, a lot of guys. I was in the front of the line; I was second in the line. The sergeant came around and was picking people to serve (the food.) And he came to me and he said "Soldier, I'm ordering you to serve." And I said, "But I got here early so I could be one of the first ones to eat." You know I'm the second in the line. He says, "I'm giving you an order" and he put his hand on me like he was going to push me. I laid him out. I'd had enough. I couldn't take it anymore. It was all I could do to stop from, probably, killing his ass. If the others hadn't... I'd had it up to here. I'd done my part, don't ask me to do shit. (laughs) I'm through! That was my attitude, I did what I was supposed to do. I did it well. I did it without going through anything.<sup>156</sup>

For fighting with a superior officer Cranshaw was sent to the stockade.

They put me in the stockade, so I fucked up again. I'm going backwards in the procedure. There was no one guarding me, I was in the stockade, but no one guarding me. I said well fuck it. So, I go up in the hills, there are chicks up there. I (would) go and have a good time. I think I stayed up there maybe a week or two. Nobody knew I was gone. So, I came back, went in the stockade. It was still open, nobody seemed to know I did anything...<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

While he was detained for this incident, a request came for someone with typing skills to report to headquarters to work in the office.

And I could type, I took a typing class in school. Cause all the girls, you know, were taking typing. With this school we had in Evanston, it was huge. All the guys were taking auto mechanics and wood shit. I said “The girls are over there; I’m going with them. I ain’t staying with these fuckin’ hard heads.” So, I learned to type and when they called and said we need one person, somebody who could type for headquarters company, I said “Shit, that’s me.”<sup>158</sup>

Cranshaw was assigned to the field office to perform clerical tasks because he was able to type: a skill that was not common for men at the time. One day a set of discharge papers for the longest-serving soldiers arrived in the office.

“We need somebody to type. We need a typist for headquarters.” I said, “I can type.” Went to headquarters and became a typist. I think I typed for maybe two days and an order came down... whoever had been in the company the longest, you’re ready to go home. That was me. I typed up my orders. I typed up that shit and was fuckin’ gone. I had already gone through the shit, nobody else had been there as long as I. I had done mine and I was really very good... So, when it came time to go, shit, fuck it. I’ve been here the longest. I’ve endured this bullshit, now it’s over for me. I ain’t staying another minute. And that was it. I wrote my orders up.<sup>159</sup>

The documents that Cranshaw created convinced his commanding officers to allow him to leave Korea with the group of discharged soldiers. In order to leave, Cranshaw needed to travel from field headquarters to the port to meet a transport ship. However, there was no transportation at headquarters to bring him to the port. Cranshaw was given a motorcycle to drive himself to the port; however, he had never ridden a motorcycle, and had difficulty learning.

I had a few mishaps after I got out of the stockade, ‘cause I didn’t have transportation. And they gave me a motorcycle. They gave me a motorbike to go to the depot to leave and I lost control and went through somebody’s house. That wasn’t pleasant. The Koreans, they had shacks, and I took the

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

shack out. (laughs) I had gone through the house; the house was gone... they were home. Shit, there was nothing I could do about it. I took somebody's house out. It was a shack, but I took the shack out. (laughs) I felt bad, but I didn't feel bad enough that I was gonna stay longer. It was a shack with bamboo and cardboard and all of that shit. I just took it out, I didn't mean to, but I took it out. I lost control of the bike, and shit I took that fucker out...<sup>160</sup>

Despite the accident, Cranshaw was determined to get out of Korea, and continued to ride to meet the ship.

... shit that was the only way I was gonna get to the depot. Well, after I wrecked the house (laughs) I stayed on it. I was on it the whole way. It was long (to get to the depot) 'cause I had all of that mapped out. I was out of that fucker.<sup>161</sup>

Cranshaw boarded a troop transport ship in Korea and embarked towards Washington State.<sup>162</sup> The crossing was arduous, and he was again assigned duties that he disagreed with.

Now, I get to the depot, they have a bunch of guys going home on a ship. They call me to work in the kitchen. I said "Fuck you! Are you fuckin' kiddin'?" You gotta be jokin'!" I remember taking a whole gallon of ice cream and just flushing it down the toilet. I was pissed, I said "No, I ain't workin' in no fuckin' kitchen. Not after all of the shit that I've gone through. You guys can forget it." So, they made me an MP.<sup>163</sup>

Eventually he was asked to join a band on the ship to provide entertainment and distraction during the voyage.

And then they finally came around and said "We're putting a band together for the ship. Can anybody play?" ... So, they ended up, I was gonna be in the MP on the ship, but since I could play the bass then I was gonna be part of the entertainment. But the ship ride coming (back), that was wicked! Oh man!<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw described awful conditions on the crossing with many of the soldiers gravely ill from seasickness.

When we had meals everybody was standing, they just had these long tables, and if the ship shifted this way (motions right) by the time the plate came back to you, somebody had thrown up in it! Guys were sick... When we got off the ship, the ship pulled into Puget Sound or one of those places. Before we got off, we were on deck from four o'clock until about eight, standing 'cause the rest of the people, they had to take off the people who were so sick they couldn't move. It wasn't a luxury ship, believe me. And coming from that far, it didn't stop for shit. It was sickening... When I saw them take all of these guys off, I mean, they were wheeling (them off). It took four hours for them to get all of the sick soldiers, who had (been sick) off the ship before we could leave. And of course, when you're there, everybody thinks they can take it, that it's ok. So, you're fighting, all of these guys have been fighters, they've already fought. So not to be able to take it for the ship ride was rough.<sup>165</sup>

Cranshaw managed to avoid many of the ill effects of seasickness by performing in the band.<sup>166</sup>

But by me playing the shows, as long as I was playing, I was able to keep my food down. And the rest of the time I could sleep. So, if I was asleep, I was cool. So, I lucked out on it... It was sickening, but I was able to keep my food down because of playing. If I was laying down, I was cool. So, we would do a show, maybe in the evening and then I'd go right back to bed... My cot, I may have been four cots up. Once I was in the cot it didn't bother me. It was cool, I wanted to be up there 'cause I didn't want the other guys to be throwing up on me! Are you kiddin'? I said "No!" I made sure I got up on the top. But it was wicked, and it was hard. It was hard for me, and I lucked out! But watching what was happening to some of the other people, it was a rough voyage from Korea to Washington State, believe me that was a fucking rough ride. It's a long one. But I had a good time, I had a ball, as far as I'm concerned. I had a good time with the guys.<sup>167</sup>

After the grueling voyage across the Pacific, Cranshaw returned to settle once again in Chicago. Cranshaw did mention that his military service was not all bad; in fact,

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

he met drummer Walter Perkins while in basic training at Camp Roberts in California.<sup>168</sup> He also met saxophonist Plas Johnson while in the military.<sup>169</sup> Cranshaw was awarded a Purple Heart during his service in Korea, when he was injured by a combatant who threw a knife into his leg.<sup>170</sup>

## Part II: Chicago 1953-1959

Cranshaw started a family shortly after returning from Korea, and he had three children while in Chicago: Kim, Myra, and Cheryl. Cranshaw also resumed his musical studies at three Chicago institutions over several years. He attended Bradley University, Northwestern University, and Roosevelt University, where he pursued a degree in music therapy.<sup>171</sup>

I was a Bradley Brave in '51 - '52. Northwestern, I went after. I came out but I had taken classes at Northwestern. I went to Northwestern and took classes even before I went there because it's in Evanston; the music department is right there. And then I went when I came out. But when I came out of the service is when I started to get into my education. 'Cause I had read about musical therapy. And they didn't have that study at Northwestern, and they had it at Roosevelt. So, I was going on a G.I. Bill. But it was a nice school, it was a University. It still exists... But it was a nice school. I enjoyed the professors. Everybody was really, really beautiful. Northwestern was nice too, but I'm right there in Evanston so (I was) grabbin' a course, I'm studying with the bass teacher at Northwestern. You know, and so forth because I'm there. I was trying to utilize what I could but also time was a thing and I had kids.<sup>172</sup>

Cranshaw earned his degree from Roosevelt University,<sup>173</sup> but never practiced music therapy as a career. Instead, he took a job collecting garbage, and he played bass with various groups. One such group was led by the pianist Eddie Baker, who was one of

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<sup>168</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul"

<sup>169</sup> Jisi "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 32.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Feather, "*The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Sixties*," 101.

<sup>172</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>173</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

Cranshaw's professors at Roosevelt (and with whom Cranshaw would record with Max Roach in 1958).<sup>174</sup> Baker and Cranshaw also played in a trio with drummer Walter Perkins, who Cranshaw had recently met in Korea. Perkins would become one of the most important musical collaborators in his early career.<sup>175</sup>

Cranshaw became more active in the Chicago jazz scene and began to play jazz professionally during this time. Chicago had an extremely active jazz and blues scene. By chance, thanks to the location of one of his early apartments, Cranshaw was able to hear some of the best blues artists who travelled through Chicago.

I liked rhythm and blues... that shit was always jumping... my kids... when they were babies... I lived next to a masonic temple. I had a basement apartment and every Saturday they would have dances at the masonic temple. I would hear Howlin Wolf, might be Muddy Waters, could be Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt, but this was for dancing. And boy I'd be sittin' in the bed and Myra would be bouncin' on my chest, listening to the music.<sup>176</sup>

Cranshaw also became acquainted with many of the great Chicago area bassists, as he heard them in clubs and worked opposite them. Cranshaw specifically remembered Israel Crosby, Victor Sproles, Gene Wright, and Wilbur Ware. Cranshaw admired Ware but knew that he had a drug problem and frequently needed to borrow an instrument, since he had pawned his own bass. As much as Cranshaw looked up to Ware, he knew he could not trust him and always accompanied Ware in order to keep his bass from being pawned.

Wilbur Ware – Wilbur Beware!... Wilbur used to use my bass all the time because he would pawn his stuff. He would call me, but I would go with him. I would never leave the bass with him and say, "Well, you bring it back home." I knew the deal, but I wanted to hear him play. I watched Israel

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<sup>174</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw,"

<sup>175</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>176</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 May 2016).

Crosby with Ahmad Jamal. We worked opposite guys like that, so I got a chance to really learn a lot more about jazz...<sup>177</sup>

Cranshaw was also influenced by many bassists who were located outside of Chicago. He listed several of the bassists that influenced his concept and playing style.

I loved what Jimmy Blanton, Charles Mingus, Oscar Pettiford, Israel Crosby, and Scott LaFaro were doing, because it brought the bass front and center. But my heroes were the pocket players - Ray Brown, Paul Chambers, Wilbur Ware, and Eugene Wright. My earliest influences were Milt Hinton and Chubby Jackson... It wasn't so much the notes they played - it was their energy. The spirit they put behind the music as they pumped out quarter-notes really drove a band along. That seemed crucial to me, coming from a drum background. I became a groove disciple and worked harder at it than anything else, probably at the expense of becoming a great soloist.<sup>178</sup>

Cranshaw made his first recording in 1957 for the Argo label, with the group MJT+3. The group's name was an abbreviation for "Modern Jazz Two Plus Three," which indicated their initial instrumentation of two horns and three rhythm section instruments.<sup>179</sup> Cranshaw was a founding member of the MJT+3, which was led by Walter Perkins.<sup>180</sup> The group rehearsed for two years before they ever performed publicly; they also recorded their first album before they had played live.<sup>181</sup> Shortly after the MJT+3 recorded their first album, they began to work extensively throughout Chicago thanks to the support of Holmes "Daddy-O" Daylie, a popular radio disc jockey on WAIT.<sup>182</sup> Daylie arranged for the MJT+3 to audition for Frank Holzfeind, the owner of Chicago's Blue Note Club, which resulted in a lengthy engagement.<sup>183</sup> The group

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Jisi "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 32.

<sup>179</sup> Frank H. Holzfeind, notes to MJT+3, *Daddy-O Presents the MJT+3* (1957), LP Argo Records LP521

<sup>180</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>181</sup> Holzfeind, notes to MJT+3, *Daddy-O Presents the MJT+3*

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

stayed together for several years, but went through many personnel changes. Collective members include “Muhal” Richard Abrams, Harold Mabern, Booker Little, Paul Serrano, Nicky Hill, Frank Strozier, George Coleman, Willie Thomas, and Bill Henderson.

Cranshaw and Perkins remained constant throughout these changes.<sup>184</sup>

Despite a career as an emerging jazz bassist, Cranshaw continued to work as a garbage man to support his family. His schedule often required that he travel to his musical engagements directly from his day job, where he collected garbage on a truck. Cranshaw recalled occasional maggots in his pant cuffs, and the disgusted reactions from his bandmates:

... once I started to work with the MJT+3 and we rehearsed, Mabern would be laughing cause I'd come off of the garbage truck, working, and I go make a rehearsal and they're trying to figure out who is this motherfucker, you know picking up garbage, but he still wants to play.<sup>185</sup>

In fact, Harold Mabern knew Cranshaw only as a garbage man prior to their work together in the MJT+3. Mabern recalled:

Walter Perkins... asked me if I wanted to be a part of it. (The MJT+3) I said “Of course!” He told me who was going to be in it. He said, “We're going to use little brother Bobby Cranshaw on bass.” At that time, I didn't know Cranshaw was a musician, I knew he worked on the garbage truck. But during that time there was no “Sanitation” you were a garbage man. I said, “You mean that garbage guy, on the garbage truck?” We started laughing. That's how I found out about him. At the time I didn't know. I used to see him in his (football) jersey, (number) 00 he's working on the garbage truck, he's the garbage man. That's how we met originally. Then we started doing gigs together and we started playing in the group together The MJT+3.<sup>186</sup>

Cranshaw and Perkins also frequently worked together outside of the MJT+3, backing local and touring artists in the Chicago area.

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<sup>184</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>185</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>186</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)



Walter was the drummer I worked with 90 percent of the time and we had such a nice combination together. When people called, they (would) call Walter (and say) “You and Bob come and play the gig.” You know they probably wouldn’t call me first, they’d call Walter “You and Bob.” ‘Cause they already knew what we could do together...<sup>187</sup>

Chicago had a large and thriving jazz community dating back to the turn of the twentieth century,<sup>188</sup> and it continued to grow until the 1950s when Cranshaw became active. By that time there were numerous clubs in which to perform, including the Cloister (which became the first Playboy Club,) The London House, the Pershing Lounge,<sup>189</sup> and many other smaller clubs throughout Chicago’s South Side. Thanks to the many venues, there were numerous opportunities for live bands. Cranshaw found himself in high demand.

Yeah, I was doing all kinds of gigs in Chicago. I worked seven nights a week, you know, I would have a gig and it was like three days (on), three days (off). I worked a lot at a place called the Cloister, and it was at (that) place that was how the Playboy thing (got started). All of those guys hung out so they were young guys with money and that’s where I was with Eddie Higgins and so forth, so I played two nights there, I played two nights at another club, with Eddie Higgins, and I played the weekend on the South Side with the MJT+3. So shit, I was cookin’, I didn’t have to ask for or look for anything. It was all there but it was growing. I was gaining my strength; I was learning how to play. I was learning tunes to play. And it opened me up.<sup>190</sup>

These clubs offered extended engagements to both local groups and visiting artists.

I’m an Oscar Peterson fan. I played opposite Oscar for years in Chicago. They would come to a place called The London House, which was a big room for all of the celebrities. They would be at The London House for a whole month. I worked with a trio – Eddie Higgins and Walter Perkins and myself – and for a month, it was like taking a beating [laughs]. You know?

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> John von Rhein, Annette Fern, Sara Velez, Robert C. Marsh, Bruce Carr, and William Kenney. "Chicago (city)." *Grove Music Online*. 2001; Accessed 7 Sep. 2019. <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000041883>.

<sup>189</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>190</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

I got a chance to learn from Ray Brown, but it was like they just stomped us. We would open, and it was like the steak came in; we were the salad, and they would just wipe us.<sup>191</sup>

Despite the embarrassment of playing opposite Oscar Peterson's group with Ray Brown, Cranshaw looked forward to the experience and grew from it.

But now the next group that came in. I remember being wiped out by Oscar Peterson and the next group that came to the London House was Jonah Jones. And Jonah Jones caught it, 'cause we took out Oscar. Jonah and the group had to be playing. Whoever came in next, would really be playing other than that. Because we were wounded you know. We were animals and we were wounded so we needed to come back. But it was a nice pride and we looked to get washed...<sup>192</sup>

The experience of working opposite Peterson's trio at the London House allowed Cranshaw to listen to the band and form a relationship with bassist Ray Brown. As Cranshaw described, "I was a Ray Brown clone..."<sup>193</sup>

... I got a chance to sit and listen to Oscar. Be embarrassed by Ray you know. I fought it. They'd be there for a month. It was a hard fuckin' month... I met Ray, I think I met him before, but it was around that time. Ray knew of me from people talking. Later we all took our basses to Ray's apartment, about seven of us. In Chicago, his hotel. (knocks on table) He opened the door and he saw all of us with our basses standing there, ready to challenge him. You know he was hysterical laughing... Me, Victor Sproles, Richard Evans, Yancey. We went up there, but by that time I had all of Ray's shit. So, I would be playing shit back to him... So I knew all of Ray Brown. So, when we walked in I said "Ray I know all your shit!" I said you played this (sings bass line) and I'd play something, and he was on the floor laughing! "Oh, I heard you play this" (sings bass line) And I would run it down, but I knew I had the Ray Brown feel. I was aware that I was in line with that from the very beginning.<sup>194</sup>

Chicago produced numerous reputable jazz musicians as well as groups, like the MJT+3, that gained popularity outside of Chicago. Cranshaw recalled, "... all the people

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

from Chicago were proud. There were only three groups coming out of Chicago (at the time) and it was Ahmad (Jamal), Ramsey (Lewis), and the MJT+3.”<sup>195</sup> Jamal was already well-established by the time Cranshaw was active in Chicago, and his example inspired the younger Chicago-based groups.

At that time, Ahmad Jamal was already on his way: he was the big group as far as name recognition. But Ramsey Lewis and our group were the younger groups coming up.<sup>196</sup>

Visiting artists would also travel through Chicago and pick up local musicians; these musicians would perform in clubs and would occasionally record with these groups. Cranshaw’s first experience working with a major jazz star was his weeklong tenure with Sonny Stitt in a club.

... I suffered. I wasn’t ready. The rest of the guys were more ready than I was, and at that point I said ok, they got me once, but they ain’t gonna get me again. And Sonny Stitt came back maybe two or three months later. I went huntin’ for him. I said check my shit out now, me and Walter. I said goddamn. Check me out now! I went huntin’ for him! Me and Walter went in one night and burned that fuckin’ club down with him. But I got stronger. I got, probably, more confident in what I was doing.<sup>197</sup>

Cranshaw had a deep respect for Perkins’ playing, and the two became almost inseparable.

Walter was probably the only one who had his own individual thing. But Walter was such a great “time” player. And he had such a groove, the only person that I could think that had a groove on drums like Walter Perkins was Art Blakey, you know. He had such a groove. He could sit down, and the stuff would just swing. As soon as he hit, it was just gone. So, there are people that have that ability and Walter Perkins was one of those people. And I stayed with Walter - we became like a duo. Any time you saw Walter Perkins, Bob Cranshaw wasn’t far behind. ‘Cause we seemed to lock and have such an enjoyable time in playing. We would go around Chicago and we would finish work with Eddie Higgins and then we would go to another

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<sup>195</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>196</sup> Weeks, “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul.”

<sup>197</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 May 2016).

club. And as soon as Walter and I walk in the door you could hear the people start to buzz. ‘Cause they knew we were going to sit in. We would sit in and play two tunes, and just burn. And then we’d leave and go someplace else, you know. So, it was a wonderful feeling. And I came up with that kind of thing.<sup>198</sup>

In 1958, Cranshaw made his second recording with a group led by the legendary drummer Max Roach.<sup>199</sup> He alluded to his feelings of not being prepared in the notes to the album: “He (Max Roach) keeps me so busy listening to him that there are a few times when I almost get lost.”<sup>200</sup> This group included Booker Little and George Coleman, both of whom were members of the MJT+3, although they never recorded with that group. “He (Little) was taken from our group and went with Max. He and George Coleman.”<sup>201</sup> Also on the recording was Eddie Baker, who was one of Cranshaw’s professors at Bradley University, and with whom he was playing and recording frequently at the time.<sup>202</sup> Little and Coleman both joined Roach’s band and left Chicago with Roach, but Cranshaw’s family obligations kept him from leaving with the group.

Cranshaw continued to perform throughout Chicago and record with the MJT+3. He worked with other local Chicago artists and appeared on the Sonny Criss album *At the Crossroads*, which was recorded in either 1958 or 1959.<sup>203</sup> *At the Crossroads* also featured Perkins as well as Wynton Kelly under the pseudonym “Joe Scott.”<sup>204</sup> One of the

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<sup>198</sup> Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>199</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>200</sup> Anonymous, notes to Max Roach plus 4, *On the Chicago Scene* (1958), LP Emarcy Records MG36132

<sup>201</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>202</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Criss, *At the Crossroads* (1958/1959), LP, Peacock’s Progressive Jazz PLP91 802P.

many lessons Cranshaw learned during his Chicago years was the power of the Union, which remained vital throughout his life.

Oh, it was some dumb shit. I went on a gig, I got a call to do a gig in Milwaukee with one of my brother's friends, a saxophonist Junior McDonald. He could play his ass off; he was a good friend of Sonny's (Rollins). He knew Sonny well. He could fuckin' play! But he was strung out, like my brother, they were all fucked up. Junior took a deposit for the gig and then three days before the gig, he went to Lexington for the cure. Well he got the fuckin' deposit! He got part of the money! So, we go up, the concert is in Milwaukee, at the Union building! I'm in the Union though, but my brother was not. So, we go up, Junior McDonald, I have no idea of what's happening. I didn't know that he had gone to Lexington. We go up to Milwaukee, when we got there, before we started to play, I asked the Union executive. "Look, now I was called for the gig. I'm a sideman on this job. And Junior McDonald, he made somebody else, I don't know who he made the leader." But Junior McDonald was probably not in the union either. So, because my brother and Junior, I don't know who else was there, were not in the union, the blame fell on me... And I'm saying, what kind of shit is that? I asked before we played, before we hit a note! "Is it alright? Am I going to end up with any trouble because I'm playing this gig and I'm Union and they're not?" and they said "No, you're ok." But it wasn't ok. I don't know whether somebody complained about whether we didn't get paid 'cause he took half the money to begin with. So that was that deal.<sup>205</sup>

The result of this issue with the Union resulted in disciplinary action: Cranshaw was expelled from the Chicago Musician's Union.

For a working musician like Cranshaw, expulsion from the Union meant he was ineligible for Union work, which provided some of the best work opportunities. One of Cranshaw's lost opportunities was a bass position with Ahmad Jamal. Israel Crosby and Vernel Fournier left Ahmad Jamal in 1962, and Cranshaw and Perkins were asked to join the group.

When Vernel and Israel left to go with George Shearing, he (Ahmad Jamal) called Walter and me. And I couldn't do the gig, 'cause they put me out of the Union. Ahmad was putting another group together, I lost out. 'Cause everybody had to be in the Union. So, Ahmad called me and said "I can't hire you cause you're not in the Union." I lost it. I lost the chance. Walter

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<sup>205</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

went with him. And, Jamil (Nassar, who went by George Joyner at that time) ...<sup>206</sup>

Though Cranshaw lost the important opportunity to join Jamal, he maintained a positive attitude and continued to progress in the Chicago jazz scene. Cranshaw said, “There was nothing that I could do about it. Circumstance, and that was it. I felt bad but I said fuck it. You know, if that’s what it is, then that’s what it is.”<sup>207</sup> Thanks to the success of the MJT+3, Cranshaw’s work at the Playboy Club, and his close relationship with Walter Perkins, Cranshaw received several important playing opportunities at the first Playboy Jazz Festival in 1959. This festival was a large event held at Soldier Field, which attracted an audience of almost 70,000 over the two days of August 8 and 9, 1959.<sup>208</sup> Cranshaw performed with two legendary headliners: Coleman Hawkins and Sonny Rollins.<sup>209</sup> Cranshaw had vivid memories of the event, particularly of his set with Rollins.

Walter Perkins called me and said, “Bob, I got a call from Sonny Rollins. He told me to get a bass player for the jazz festival. Do you want to do it?” I said, “Yeah. I’ll do it.” All of a sudden, after I hung the phone up, I started to think. I said, “Oh, shit. I don’t know whether I’m up for that” because the Wilbur Ware and the Victor Sproles, they were the more experienced bass players in Chicago. And there was no piano. If there had been piano, I would have said, yeah, because I would have felt comfortable. But here, it was just bass and drums. I said, “Aw, man. I may be biting off more than I can chew.” But I followed through. Sonny told us to be at the place; it was an afternoon concert. He told us to be there a couple hours ahead and set up. We get there and we set up. I hadn’t met Sonny. I heard Sonny play in Chicago, but it was with the Wilbur Ware and the more experienced people when he was there. I didn’t know him. I remember, the concert started. The guy came to us and said, “Where’s Sonny?” I said, “I have no idea. I haven’t met him yet. I don’t know. Maybe he’s here. I have no idea.” The first group played for about forty minutes. The second group, I remember, went on. They played. The third group – I think, I don’t know whether it was the Four Freshmen or something – and then there was a Dixieland band playing

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Nina Gordon, “Playboy and Jazz: A History.” <https://news.allaboutjazz.com/playboy-and-jazz-a-history.php> accessed 9 September 2019.

<sup>209</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

before us. Now, these groups are playing. The Dixieland band played twenty minutes, half an hour. We were next, and everybody was waiting for Sonny because Sonny hadn't been out... The Dixieland band is playing and playing, and people are now tired of hearing that. All of the sudden, Sonny's there. At that point, we ate it up.<sup>210</sup>

Rollins and Cranshaw had never met, and they went onstage without any kind of preparation or discussion beforehand. "But see, he had picked his time. Suddenly he appears from the wings. We said hello. We went out there, no set list, nothing. 68,000 people. We tore it up."<sup>211</sup> While the two musicians did not know each other, Rollins was familiar with Cranshaw's playing before they had met at the festival.<sup>212</sup> The strong chemistry between Cranshaw and Perkins was also well known by this time, and may have contributed to the success of the performance despite the lack of preparation.

Many of the live performances from the festival were recorded for radio broadcast. One track from Hawkins' set was released on *The Essential Coleman Hawkins* on Verve in 1965, and the full Hawkins set was released as *Blowin' Up A Breeze* on Spotlite Records in 1976.<sup>213</sup> Rollins' set was recorded, but was never publicly released.<sup>214</sup> Cranshaw obtained a bootleg copy of the performance; it contained the songs "I Want to Be Happy," "Oleo," an untitled blues fragment, and Rollins' first recorded performance of "Without a Song."<sup>215</sup> During "Without a Song," Rollins performed an extended cadenza during which he modulated abruptly from the original key of Eb to G. Cranshaw

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<sup>210</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>211</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul."

<sup>212</sup> Sonny Rollins "Sonny Rollins Remembers Bob Cranshaw" *JazzTimes Online*, 10 April, 2017 <https://jazztimes.com/features/tributes-and-obituaries/sonny-rollins-remembers-bob-cranshaw/> Accessed 21 September 2019.

<sup>213</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Sonny Rollins"

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=37462>, accessed 9 September 2019.

immediately followed Rollins into the new key without any perceptible difficulty.

Cranshaw's keen sensitivity and adaptability helped build the foundation of his long musical partnership with Rollins.

Sonny said after he changed (keys during "Without a Song"), when he did that, I became his bass player... When he changed keys and I went with him, I became his bass player because he felt like he could do whatever he wanted to do, and I was there. I'm a supportive player. I don't have to be the star of anything. I just like playing with people.<sup>216</sup>

Cranshaw's ability to adapt to unplanned, improvised key changes was an asset that he employed with other bandleaders throughout his career. Other examples of this occurred with Rollins in 1969. George Cables stated,

... we'd play some songs like "Three Little Words" on each set, but every time in a different key. "Skylark": at the first rehearsal, it was like, "Ok, Eb." Second rehearsal it was "Ok, Bb." And the next time was the date for the record, and it was "Ok, Bb," but he put the horn in his mouth, and it came out in G! [laughs] So that was it. And Bob Cranshaw's over there, just smiling, laughing.<sup>217</sup>

Cranshaw also recalled this phenomenon during a recording session with Errol Garner and Grady Tate for the 1973 album *The Magician*.

Another experience that I've had like Sonny's – I did a CD with Erroll Garner and Grady Tate. His last CD. The same kind of experience, like Sonny, played standards. Grady and I looked at each other. I heard it, so I didn't panic, but the two of us are looking there and we're laughing because how in the hell?...

Monty Alexander, another of Cranshaw's collaborators, would frequently modulate without warning.

So, working with a lot of piano players like Monty Alexander and working with Errol Garner and people like that who play by ear. I mean Monty and I; we would play and start a tune in one key, and we could end up in another

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<sup>216</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>217</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with George Cables: Part 2,"

<https://ethaniverson.com/interviews/interview-with-george-cables-part-2/>, accessed 9 October 2019.



key, and not really, we didn't really think about it. It was nothing that we thought we were in another key, it felt like the key that we were in. I mean we would just go off on tangents with just playing. And it was wonderful for me because it gave me a chance to use (it). God, I feel gave me the talent and the ear to be able to hear, so I didn't see any reason why not to use it.<sup>218</sup>

Pianist Mike LeDonne had a similar experience with Cranshaw.

I remember playing with Bob and getting lost in the changes, and he was right with me in the wrong changes. He just followed me. He would just follow, wherever the hell you went... just listening to me and reacting and playing whatever the hell with me as if he's attached to my brain somehow. He told me that happened in a big concert with Hank Jones where they were playing with some singer. Hank took a solo and Hank did the same thing. He took a left turn and somehow, he got off, and he was playing a whole different tune... That's how Bob was, he followed. That was his talent: to just listen and he was right there playing the right thing all the time. That's something you can't really teach. But that was something he did that put him above a whole lot of other great bass players.<sup>219</sup>

Cranshaw also asserted that his ability to rely on good ears may have handicapped his development of other musical skills, such as reading sheet music, because he did not need to study as hard to learn how to play.

... because I had an ear it was easier for me to play. So, I kind of learned to read, but I kind of use both situations. Since God gave me the ear, I didn't throw it away. I just also use my ear and I think it kind of hurt in the way that I didn't follow through probably with like the studies, because I already heard, you know, if I heard a piece it was all I needed. I could play it. Once I heard it, it was over.<sup>220</sup>

The 1959 Playboy Jazz Festival was one of Rollins' final public appearances before a two-year hiatus.<sup>221</sup> During his absence from the public eye, Rollins wrote to Cranshaw to inform him that he wanted to form a new group.

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<sup>218</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>219</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>220</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>221</sup> Richard Palmer, *Sonny Rollins: The Cutting Edge* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004), 54.

Sonny wrote me a letter and said, “I’m going to put a group together. Would you like to be a part?” I said, “Yes,” but then I started to think again. I said, “Oh, shit. I don’t know whether I’m ready for Sonny Rollins. I’ve been dicking around here, but I don’t know whether I’m ready for someone like Sonny Rollins.” He didn’t do it right away. He would write me letters and so forth, and a year later, he put it together.<sup>222</sup>

Although Cranshaw had performed with Rollins during his successful festival appearance, he still had doubts related to both his own readiness to play in Rollins’ group, and the seriousness of Rollins’ intentions for him to join.

Now Sonny hadn’t really come out at that time, he was still in retirement. But that was the only thing that he had work, and he asked me at that time would I like to be a part of his group. So, I said sure, you know. But I never thought that Sonny Rollins, you know, come on, like a joke, but I’ll go along with it, it’s okay, I appreciate you asking. About a year and a half later he wrote me letters. We didn’t start right away. About a year later he finally said, “I’m ready to put this group together.”<sup>223</sup>

Rollins’ letters were sincere, and Cranshaw did join Rollins’ new group, though he would need to wait until 1962 to do so.

### **Part III: 1959-1962**

One of Cranshaw’s early opportunities outside of Chicago came in late-1959. He was summoned to New York by Julian “Cannonball” Adderley for an engagement at Birdland.<sup>224</sup> He did not stay long for a variety of reasons.

I played two days and it was so dirty in this fuckin’ place I said ‘naw. ‘Cause I wasn’t accustomed to... The first time I remember I walked out of the hotel and I saw them picking up the garbage in the front. You know we have alleys... in Evanston. You know so it was a different culture. I said, “What the fuck is this?” Mentally I wasn’t ready. Musically, maybe. And I stayed for a couple of days.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>223</sup> Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>224</sup> Weeks, “Bob Cranshaw’s Heart and Soul.”

<sup>225</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

Cranshaw's experiences playing with and meeting musicians in Chicago helped him to find his way on this first trip.

... most of the people who were here (in New York) that were musicians, I already knew 'cause they came through Chicago... I hadn't played with all of the guys, but you know we all knew each other... And I stayed with Wynton Kelly...He let me stay with him, which was nice, in Brooklyn...<sup>226</sup>

Cranshaw returned to Chicago after his first trip to New York but began to travel back and forth for recording sessions and performances. Cranshaw was still living in Chicago in 1960, but travelled to New York with Frank Strozier, his MJT+3 bandmate, to record with Lee Morgan, Wayne Shorter, Bobby Timmons, Louis Hayes, and Albert "Tootie" Heath on the album *The Young Lions*.<sup>227</sup> Adderley, who had called Cranshaw to New York on his first visit, also provided the liner notes to this album.<sup>228</sup> In the notes, Adderley described Cranshaw in glowing terms.

Cranshaw is already recognized by many as one of the finest young rhythm bass players around. He has a rock-hard, but flexible beat; and is a modified "Ray Brown to Sam Jones" type.<sup>229</sup>

The MJT+3 continued to record in Chicago and began to receive attention for the song "Sleepy," which was originally recorded as an instrumental in 1959. The piece was subsequently re-recorded twice in 1960: first with vocalist Bill Henderson and a band which included the saxophonist and arranger Frank Wess; and again, with Bill Henderson and the MJT+3.<sup>230</sup> "... we finally came through with the MJT, kinda had a pseudo-hit... I think it was "Sleepy" and it put us on the map."<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>228</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul."

<sup>229</sup> Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, notes to *The Young Lions*, *The Young Lions* (1960), LP Vee-Jay LP3013.

<sup>230</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>231</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

In the later part of 1959, Cranshaw made a few other recordings in Chicago with groups including the MJT+3, which was offered an extended engagement in New York.

MJT+3's pianist, Harold Mabern, recalled the group's first engagements in New York:

We got there in '59; I would say the band stayed together until about '60-'61. Then everybody started doing different things. We had two weeks at Birdland, we had two weeks at the Five Spot opposite Mal Waldron's group featuring Coltrane. That's how we first met Coltrane. (This would have been April 11-14, 1959.<sup>232</sup>) Everybody stayed in the city, but the work ended. Everybody separated, everybody did different things with different groups.  
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Cranshaw also recalled the early MJT+3 engagements and the reception they received from other New York musicians:

The whole group came here. After Ornette left The Five Spot, we went in for a month at The Five Spot after that. Then, the group kind of petered out. It was hard... It was a strange experience because when we came here, we were not accepted. The guys who were here seemed very strange... You're not the "in" guy, all of those things.<sup>234</sup>

Though Cranshaw found it difficult to be accepted in New York, he made a commitment to stay for as long as he needed to become established. "At that point, I said, 'Okay. They don't want me? They got me. Somebody is gonna have to move over.' That was my attitude. Somebody just gotta move."<sup>235</sup>

In 1960, Cranshaw recorded an album for Johnny Griffin in New York, alongside his MJT+3 bandmate, Harold Mabern. The album was released on Riverside Records and was titled *The Big Soul Band*. It featured a large ensemble with Clark Terry, Charlie

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<sup>232</sup> Lewis Porter and others, *The John Coltrane Reference*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 169.

<sup>233</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview, (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)

<sup>234</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

Persip, and several others, with arrangements by Norman Simmons.<sup>236</sup> Cranshaw was only twenty-seven years old, and was very new to recording in a studio with groups other than the MJT+3; he remembered struggling at this session:

It was rough for me because I became more disciplined after the date. It was terrible for me. It was a lot of young guys on the date. I should have followed Charlie Persip and Clark Terry because they all had pencils and they wrote everything down. I thought, because I was young, I was going to remember everything, all of the changes. I got on the date and I panicked. I didn't remember shit. I never was in that position ever again... I have (in) all my bass' (cases) – there's three or four pencils. I didn't take a pencil and I didn't write down, "We're going from here to here to here." I just assumed that I could remember all of it. When they said, "Take One," I panicked. That was the only time I thought that I was very, very uncomfortable. I went to the record company and apologized. It was uncomfortable for me.<sup>237</sup>

Cranshaw recovered from this difficult experience and continued to record in Chicago and New York throughout 1960. In October of 1960, Cranshaw again recorded with Wayne Shorter and Lee Morgan, but was joined by Cedar Walton and Art Blakey for a session in Chicago which would become Shorter's second album as a leader.<sup>238</sup> This was Cranshaw's first time playing with Blakey, who was one of Cranshaw's favorite musicians. After the session, Blakey asked Cranshaw to join his group but Cranshaw declined.

... I would love to have been a part of a rhythm section with them (The Jazz Messengers). There are not a lot of people that I would love to have been with in a rhythm section but (Blakey was one of them) ... 'Cause we had the same kind of shit... I didn't go with Art 'cause I couldn't deal with the other shit. I couldn't get paid in drugs so I couldn't depend on spending time bullshitting. But in my heart, I would've liked to have had a chance to play.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>239</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 May 2016).

Though Cranshaw was new in New York, he was already familiar with many of the musicians in the jazz community from their visits to Chicago. He was especially familiar with the bassists on the New York scene. “Paul [Chambers] and I were close from Chicago. We knew each other, and Doug Watkins.”<sup>240</sup> By 1960, Richard Davis and Wilbur Ware, two other bassists from Chicago, had also moved to New York.

One New York bassist that Cranshaw had never met was Milt Hinton. Cranshaw considered Hinton to be one of his biggest influences, and they had a chance meeting while walking down the street. Cranshaw recalled,

I had been in New York, maybe a few months, and I was on 48th and Broadway. I was on my way to rehearsal with somebody and I had a bag on my bass that was raggedy and about to fall off, but I couldn't afford anything else. I was walking down to the rehearsal and this gentleman dressed with a tie stopped me on the street. He said, “Hi. What's your name?” I said, “Bob Cranshaw.” He said, “Are you a professional bassist?” I said, “Yes, sir.” He said, “I'm Milt Hinton.” I said, “Oh, shit.” It was like meeting God. Here's my mentor. He took me into Manny's, and he bought me a bass case on the spot... Took me and bought me a bass case right there. He said as a professional, I couldn't be walking around with a bag like that.<sup>241</sup>

This serendipitous encounter started a relationship that changed Cranshaw's fortunes as a musician in New York.

I followed Milt around. I used to just go. They were doing a lot of recording. They were recording all day. I would just go to the date and I would sit on the side... when The Judge walked into the room, you could feel the energy. Everybody was talking. That was the kind of guy he was. That was the life. He was my biggest, my most wonderful influence, was watching The Judge... I followed Milt's career all the way to the point where I used to call him every Sunday. I'd say, “Judge, I just want the blessing,” just to talk to him and so forth.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw learned more than just musical lesson from Hinton, he also learned how to be a professional.

He taught me to be open-minded. Even if a job was a drag, his credo was to stay positive, so as not to bring down the other musicians. Overall, I became sort of a Milt clone in life as well as music, because I loved his whole demeanor.<sup>243</sup>

Cranshaw also watched Hinton record with Joe Williams, and through this connection, Cranshaw began playing in Williams' band. Cranshaw recalled watching Hinton play on Williams' recordings, which gave him valuable insights into how to approach the material in performances.

Any time Milt Hinton would record I would follow him around like a puppy. If Milt Hinton had a date, I just wanted to see how Milt Hinton and George Duvivier, how they approached music. And I would ask questions with Joe (Williams) if they played something. I knew that after they finished recording it, I was going to have to play it. Because this is what we would do in our performances. So it was like catching firsthand the master play it, and then I could branch off of what they were playing because they might have used a larger group maybe with horns, where when we got ready to play it we had to do it with a trio. But I was there. I wanted to understand everything about that tune and what I could do. And I would ask Milt Hinton, you know, well why did you play this there, well why did you play this F here as opposed to playing it there, what did you hear here. I wanted to know everything that Milt Hinton was doing. And I became, I feel like I'm a Milt Hinton clone in a way, because I enjoy watching Milt, how he carried himself and what a gentleman he is, and how great...<sup>244</sup>

Hinton's positive influence extended beyond music: also influencing Cranshaw's professionalism and personal habits.

When Milt Hinton walked in the door, you felt an energy, you know, it was something like a storm just hit the place. I mean it was so great. And I enjoyed that feeling. So I said this is what I would like to be. This is the way I would like to carry myself. This is what I would like to become, you know.

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<sup>243</sup> Chris Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" *Bass Player*, October 1996, 32.

<sup>244</sup> Woods "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

And it maybe kept me from doing some of the things, because during that period a lot of the musicians were into a lot of drugs...<sup>245</sup>

Cranshaw also formed relationships with other bassists that had recently moved to New York. “Ron Carter, Richard Davis, and I all came in at around the same time.”<sup>246</sup> In fact Cranshaw knew Davis well before moving to New York, from their time growing up in Chicago.

I guess the teacher that I studied with in Chicago, his prize student was Richard Davis. And at that time, Richard and I are around the same age and Richard was already, they were already priming him for the Chicago Symphony at that point you know, but he passed it up. But he was really an excellent player.<sup>247</sup>

Ron Carter remembered that he, Cranshaw, and Davis were all eager to learn from the examples of Hinton and Duvivier:

... it was nice that Milt Hinton and George Duviver were the guys who made the scene possible, because at one point there were no African Americans on the studio scene at all. Maybe a trumpet player every now and then or a hot alto player, but the rhythm section, the African American players never got that call until somehow George Duviver and Milt Hinton made the scene change because they played so well. They were so professional, they were beyond reproach, so to speak. And they would understand that their role was not just to be pathfinders for having African American guys playing in the studio, but to find guys who could take their place when they were too busy and kind of mentor and assist in making the right connections to be the guy who gets called to sub if George was busy or Milt was busy or Richard Davis was busy. And they trusted Bob and I to carry the flame that they started to carry long before we came to New York.<sup>248</sup>

Cranshaw officially moved to New York in 1960; he chose Brooklyn, partly because of his experience staying there with Wynton Kelly in 1959. Brooklyn was a popular location for musicians at this time.

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Jisi, “Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best”

<sup>247</sup> Woods “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>248</sup> Ron Carter, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)



Well most of the guys, most of the musicians, seemed like they were in Brooklyn... I moved to a place called Willoughby Walk. I think I was the first one... Sonny (Rollins) moved to Willoughby Walk next, then I think Frank Strozier lived there.<sup>249</sup>

Jimmy Garrison was another of Cranshaw's neighbors.

I lived near Jimmy Garrison. So, Jimmy Garrison probably played a big part in a lot of my playing, 'cause he was always into the book (Simandl)... so, we'd get together and pull out the book...<sup>250</sup>

... the bass player with Trane (Garrison) was probably one of the few people that I hung out with 'cause we lived near each other so we'd be playing the etudes and the duets so we spent a lot of time playing together which was a good way for me to learn...<sup>251</sup>

Cranshaw also recalled the feeling of being in New York and being surrounded by so many great musicians:

At the time when I came to New York there were clubs all over the place. There were great musicians who were not big names, but they were great, they could play. You could walk to one corner and I mean I didn't even want to sleep because I would go to a club and hear a group and they'd sound so good I'd go home and I'd either want to break the bass or I'd want to start to practice, you know. It was that kind of thing going. After hearing the Milt Hinton's, I mean you'd go home and you were shaking, it was so exciting. You didn't know where to start next.<sup>252</sup>

Cranshaw made one of his first recordings as a resident of New York in November 1960. The album *The Incredible Kai Winding Trombones*, on Impulse Records, was recorded during three sessions on November 17, 21, and 23.<sup>253</sup> Cranshaw recorded eight of the twelve tracks; the other bassist on the album was Ron Carter.<sup>254</sup> Carter and Cranshaw were both making inroads into the New York scene at the time.

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<sup>249</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>252</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>253</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw recalled that they referred to themselves as the “super subs” and they were eager to fill in for more established bassists:

I remember Ron Carter and I used to stand on the corner of 53rd and talk. And we called ourselves the “super subs.” I was never going to a job if Milt Hinton was called to the job, he was first. He and George Duvivier. I wasn’t, I didn’t want to mess with that. I didn’t even want anybody to consider me being (the) first call you know. I might have been (the) fifth call. But it was okay. Because the people who were before me were so great, I didn’t mind being fifth or sixth. So, we called ourselves the “super subs.” ‘Cause when we went in on a job we could really take care of business. We both knew that we were good enough to do, (the job) but I wasn’t going to throw myself in and say that I was greater than the people who were the number ones and number twos on the job. I didn’t even think about that. If Milt Hinton got a call for a job, I was just there to hear what he was playing and to watch it go down. But I didn’t want to be called. I was praying that they wouldn’t call me you know. Call them first, and if they couldn’t do it, they would call me and I would go in for them. But don’t even think about calling me.<sup>255</sup>

Another significant association from this period was with the singer Carmen McRae. Cranshaw and his long-time friend, Walter Perkins, began working with McRae; they recorded an album with Mundell Lowe, Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, Norman Simmons, and Nat Adderley.<sup>256</sup> Cranshaw served as an integral member of McRae’s group, not only as bassist, but also as a logistics manager.

For her group I was not only the bass player, I was like the band leader. I took care of all the business for the band... But I took care of all of the music. Most of the people that we worked (with in) clubs, they were frightened to talk to Carmen. She had a guy named Bill Rubenstein, (a) piano player. Oh, that motherfucker could play... Then Norman Simmons... I stayed up all night and taught Norman every tune in the book... Every tune in the book I went over. She had three hundred and some tunes... I was thinking about my fellow man... I took care of business. I made sure the band got from place to place. I made sure that Carmen’s shit was taken care of wherever she was staying, I just became the gopher. But I liked Carmen, I enjoyed playing in the band for her.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>256</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>257</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 27 June 2016).

Cranshaw was aware of McRae's reputation for being hard on her band members, but he decided early on to ensure they had a good relationship.

... as soon as I joined her, I sat down and we talked and I said, I buttered her up first you know I said. "Carmen, you deserve the best, ok? Now if I'm not what you want then get rid of me, but I won't let you talk nasty and cuss me out on the stage. The first time you do that I'm out of here. I'm gonna treat you like a lady and I'm gonna take care of business for you, but you're gonna treat me like a gentleman also."<sup>258</sup>

Cranshaw and McRae's relationship remained professional during their time together; however, it took a drastic turn when he decided to leave her group to join Sonny Rollins.

Carmen loved me so when I got ready to leave to go with Sonny and I told her I was leaving, oh my god. Oh man... Oh lord she was pissed. She didn't speak to me for three or four years. She would see me in a club, and she would just walk by me. She wouldn't speak.<sup>259</sup>

Despite McRae's snub, Cranshaw began to record frequently by early-1962. Duke Pearson hired Cranshaw and Walter Perkins for a session with the rising star trumpeters Johnny Coles and Donald Byrd on January 12, 1962.<sup>260</sup> The album was titled *Hush*, and Cranshaw would go on to work extensively with all of the musicians on the session. Pearson became especially fond of Cranshaw's playing and professionalism and had a substantial impact on Cranshaw's career.

I did a lot of Blue Note dates because I was on time. If you said, "Be there at a certain time," I was there. It was a business for me at that point. There were great bass players that came through; sometimes they were there and sometimes, you know... They could depend upon me. I didn't put any pressure on any of the record dates. I didn't ask to be a star. I wanted to be a sideman. I wanted to be a super-sideman. I think that was the relationship: that Duke knew that if he called upon me, I would be there, and I wouldn't give anybody any problems.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>261</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

Cranshaw's avoidance of substances also made him far more reliable than many of the other active recording artists during that era.

They knew that I would come. I didn't create any scene. I was easy to work with. If this was what you wanted, I was going to try to do it without having a big head. I wasn't messed up on drugs and so forth. I didn't get into a lot of that. They didn't have any problems with me, and the company was full of people that they had to worry about, who were stars. I didn't offer that.<sup>262</sup>

In fact, Pearson offered Cranshaw so many opportunities to record that he began to feel guilty about monopolizing them.

When he became musical director for Blue Note, I would do a lot of things, but I had to tell Duke – I wanted to be very honest and we were very close – and I would tell Duke, “Don't call me for all of the dates. There's too many great bass players in New York. Other people should also have an opportunity to do some things, so please don't call me. It's not like I can't use the money, but I don't feel that it's right.”<sup>263</sup>

Cranshaw also performed and recorded regularly with the Junior Mance Trio. The group included Mickey Roker on drums and was occasionally augmented by Kenny Burrell on guitar. The group recorded an undated session in 1962 backing up singer Billie Poole.<sup>264</sup> The notes to the album also mention an association with singer Joe Williams:

... Mance has been spending considerable time of late (along with his regular colleagues, bassist Bob Cranshaw and drummer Mickey Roker) working with Joe Williams.<sup>265</sup>

Cranshaw knew Mance from Chicago and had met Roker when he came to Chicago, but this was his first time playing with Roker. The two became close friends and musical partners. “Mickey and I just locked down. We were the lock...Mickey and I, we became

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>265</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Billie Poole with the Junior Mance Trio and Kenny Burrell *Confessin the Blues*, (1962) LP, Riverside, RLP (S9) 458.

tight. I heard Mickey when he came to Chicago with Ray Bryant's trio."<sup>266</sup> Roker recalled this meeting as well in an interview with Ethan Iverson:

The way I met Cranshaw was, we was in Chicago with the Ray Bryant trio. The Ray Bryant trio consisted of me and Arthur Harper. Now, Arthur Harper used to get drunk. We had been there for about three or four days. Harper got drunk and didn't show up. There was two bands; the MJT+3 with Cranshaw, Walter Perkins, Harold Mabern, Frank Strozier and a trumpet player named Willie Thomas. They would play first, and we were the headliners with the trio. One-night Harper didn't show up for the last set. Cranshaw said, "I know the tunes," and we have been tight ever since. We hit it off right away.<sup>267</sup>

Cranshaw's memory of this interaction was nearly the same as Roker's. He said,

I heard Mickey when he came to Chicago with Ray Bryant's trio. I knew all of the music. Arthur Harper was with Ray Bryant, and Arthur would sometimes, the last set, he would get drunk. I was ready to take the gig because I knew the book. I studied everybody's book so if I had to, if there was ever a call, I was ready.<sup>268</sup>

Cranshaw and Roker became extremely close, and even became roommates for many years. Roker described their relationship as much more than simply musical:

That's my favorite bass player. That's my best friend in the world. What a bass player. When (Arthur) Harper left from that apartment in New York, this was in the sixties, I could not afford that place by myself. Not right then. I called Cranshaw and we stayed together for ten years, although he never stayed there. He stayed with his girlfriend on 89th Street or 87th Street. He would leave his clothes up there or a bass.<sup>269</sup>

Cranshaw returned to the studio on January 24, 1962 with Lee Morgan, Louis Hayes, and Barry Harris. They were joined by Clifford Jordan for a session led by Morgan, titled *Take Twelve*.<sup>270</sup> Ira Gitler described the album as a "blowing session" in

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<sup>266</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>267</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Mickey Roker,"

<https://ethaniverson.com/interviews/interview-with-mickey-roker/>, accessed 22 January 2020.

<sup>268</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

the liner notes, noting that the musicians were convened for the session and had not worked together as a group prior to the recording.<sup>271</sup> He notes that despite the spontaneity of the session,

It is customary to describe such dates, a little condescendingly even if approvingly, as “unpretentious.” But insofar as that word suggests a pleasant-but-mild outing, I rebel against using it this time. There is too much going on here for that: too much creative tending to business in the solos and in the comping, too much that is attractive and unhackneyed in the writing.<sup>272</sup>

The album was the first of many times that Cranshaw recorded with Lee Morgan, Barry Harris, and Clifford Jordan.

#### **Part IV: 1960-1962**

In 1960 and 1961, Cranshaw’s most regular work was with Junior Mance’s trio. Cranshaw began one of his most important associations in the fall of 1961, when he joined Sonny Rollins’ band. Cranshaw joined Rollins for his very first public appearance following his hiatus at the Jazz Gallery in New York.<sup>273</sup> There was a great deal of anticipation surrounding Rollins’ public return. Rollins was one of the largest stars in jazz prior to his seclusion, and his disappearance occurred at the height of his career. George Avakian summed up the situation: “It was like a pitcher on a pennant-winning team announcing after he had a twenty-game season, that he was quitting for a while to learn how to pitch.”<sup>274</sup>

Producer George Avakian also knew of the interest surrounding Rollins and his mysterious practice routine, alone on the Williamsburg Bridge. The jazz public was also

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<sup>271</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Lee Morgan, *Take Twelve*, (1962) LP, Jazzland JLP80.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> George Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Bridge*, (1962), LP, RCA Victor LPM/LSP-2527

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

aware of Rollins and the bridge from the July, 1961 article in *Metronome*, which described a mystical figure who practiced saxophone alone.<sup>275</sup> Avakian scouted the group at the Jazz Gallery to recruit them for RCA Victor.<sup>276</sup> Following Rollins' appearance at the Jazz Gallery in 1961 with his new group, he signed a contract of immense proportions (reportedly an advance of \$90,000)<sup>277</sup> with RCA Victor. This contract was much larger than was customary for jazz artists at the time, and the large budget meant that Rollins could spend much more time in the studio: thus allowing for greater flexibility, musical experimentation, and development of material.<sup>278</sup> The group on the recording included Rollins, Cranshaw, guitarist Jim Hall and drummers Harry (H.T.) Saunders or Ben Riley. Cranshaw remembered the time in the studio being very different from his usual recording experiences.

I had never made that kind of money on a record date. It was also one of the longest, because there were problems trying to harness Sonny and lock him down. We had a lot of rehearsal time in the studio to get used to it.<sup>279</sup>

The album was awarded five stars in the July 5, 1962 issue of *Downbeat*, and reviewer Ira Gitler wrote,

At the risk of being unable to give Rollins a higher numerical rating when he surpasses this album (and I have every confidence that he will) this set still has to be placed in the superlative category... The instrumental make-up of his new combo... seems ideal in that it gives him a textural setting unlike other groups and also affords him the freedom to do the soaring of which he is so capable... Cranshaw provides a solid pulse that also reveals a fine ear and a well-developed sound.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Palmer, *Sonny Rollins: The Cutting Edge*, 101.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Ira Gitler, "Record Reviews: The Bridge," *Downbeat*, 5 July 1962, 25.

The group was an immediate success thanks to the attention surrounding it, as well as to the group's excellent performances. Cranshaw is featured on "God Bless the Child," on which he plays an unaccompanied bass introduction that includes double and triple stops: very uncommon bass techniques, especially in jazz. There is a strong similarity between this introduction and Ray Brown's 1956 recording of "Alone Together."<sup>281</sup> In the outro of "Alone Together," Brown plays the same triple stops that form the basis of the introduction to "God Bless the Child," but Cranshaw takes this fragment and turns it into a fully formed musical idea that conveys the harmony of the piece. Jim Hall remembered Cranshaw's introduction and how it developed within the group:

I thought of it more as orchestration. Sometimes I would just play a single line behind Sonny. On "God Bless the Child," it starts with just Bob Cranshaw playing an introduction and Sonny playing the melody. Then on the second time around I play a type of single-note counterpoint line. I think I wrote a chart out for it. I imagine that just the single line blending with the saxophone might have been different. It just seemed logical to me.<sup>282</sup>

In a separate interview, Hall reiterated these feelings about group dynamics but also stressed the fact that Rollins was the conductor of the ensemble.

... I think ideally Sonny wanted it to be four-part music and that we should react to one another, but his presence was so strong that there was no doubt who the leader was... Sonny liked the interplay, but also, he was very much the leader.<sup>283</sup>

Cranshaw remembered that the session for "God Bless the Child" required an entire day in the studio, which is confirmed by the session information listed on the Lord

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<sup>281</sup> Anonymous, notes to Ray Brown, *Bass Hit!*, (1956), LP Verve Records MG V-8022.

<sup>282</sup> Brian Laclair, *An Exploration of Jim Hall's Guitar Stylings on the album "The Bridge" by Sonny Rollins* (D.M.A. Diss., Five Towns College, 2015) 178.

<sup>283</sup> Loren Schoenberg, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Complete RCA Recordings of Sonny Rollins*, (1997) CD, BMG Classics 09026-68675-2.



Discography. The Discography lists the date as January 30, 1962, and no other songs were tracked that day.<sup>284</sup> There were many things about the session that Cranshaw thought were extraordinary.

On “God Bless the Child,” there was a method to his (Rollins’) madness. He wasn’t satisfied with anyone’s playing or what he was doing. We kept playing it over and over. After two hours you’re tired of playing it, he hasn’t said anything, period. You play and the shit goes down. It (energy) starts to fade and all of a sudden, the last half hour it picked up. I have no idea what take he used. I remember for that tune it was long; everything else he did we never did anything like it. I remember Jim Hall saying, “What the fuck?” He was trying to figure out what it is, what Sonny wanted. In your mind you’re thinking “What kind of improvements can I make?” You become mystified; you have no idea what’s going down. In the end though it turned out Sonny knew what he was doing. The record turned out beautiful and he gave us the freedom to keep trying. He was doing something new for him. We didn’t have any music. He would just start playing and we would work out what to play. He started “God Bless” and so we just played it for hours and hours. I remember at the time I’d never made that much off a record date and never spent so much time working on a tune.<sup>285</sup>

Cranshaw was also struck by the natural way in which the music coalesced.

When we left the studio, I was pretty sure he and Jim had done something exceptional. You could feel it. When I heard the final product, I thought it was a masterpiece.<sup>286</sup>

Original producer Bob Prince also recalled the outstanding quality of the group, and the quality of the takes from the session.

The material was so good that I don’t recall a single intersplice whatsoever. The edits were so tiny as to be virtually non-existent. Every tune came out as a complete take.<sup>287</sup>

Another interesting element in “God Bless the Child” is the modulation that occurs in the final statement of the melody. The piece begins in A Major but modulates to

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<sup>284</sup> Lord, “TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>285</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>286</sup> McDonough, “Back to the Bridge,” 38.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

C Major during the final statement. This is very similar to the modulation that Rollins used in the performance of “Without a Song” from the 1959 Playboy Festival. “Without A Song” modulated from Eb to G, a major third, while “God Bless the Child” utilized the minor third transition from A to C. Rollins discussed the group’s new approach to improvisation and interplay:

We are still working out ways of improvising which are fresh, exciting to ourselves (and we hope our listeners,) and in this album we have presented some of them, such as the changes in and out of free time and back again in “Without a Song” and “You do Something to Me,” which are not set routines but are felt by the group; or the ensemble ad lib in “God Bless the Child”... which is in contra-distinction to the usual solo ad lib into the group playing in tempo... These are just some of the unusual improvisational techniques we use... I am always looking forward...<sup>288</sup>

While the sessions for *The Bridge* were still being completed, Cranshaw recorded again with Junior Mance and Mickey Roker on Valentine’s Day, February 14, 1962.<sup>289</sup> The album *Junior’s Blues* was the first time that Mance’s group with Cranshaw and Roker had recorded their own project, although they had recorded together previously when they backed singer Billie Poole.<sup>290</sup> Cranshaw was singled out in the liner notes by the editor of *Jazz Magazine*, Dan Morgenstern.

Junior had the solid support of Bob Cranshaw, a member in excellent standing of the new wave of amazingly gifted young bassists. Involved for some time in the explorations of Sonny Rollins’ “New Frontier” quartet, Cranshaw here reaffirms that his roots are deep.<sup>291</sup>

Later the same day, Cranshaw made the final recording for *The Bridge*. The Rollins group left almost immediately for a tour that included a performance on *Ralph*

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<sup>288</sup> Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Bridge*

<sup>289</sup> Lord, “TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to Junior Mance, *Juniors Blues*, (1962) LP, Riverside, RLP447.

*Gleason's Jazz Casual*, which was recorded for television on March 23, 1962.<sup>292</sup>

Cranshaw recalled the group took two cars and drove to California. He remembered that during a stop along the way, they caught someone trying to steal Jim Hall's guitar from the backseat of one of the vehicles while they stopped to eat.

The songs recorded on the *Jazz Casual* program include several selections from *The Bridge* as well as new material. Rollins sat down with Gleason during the program for an interview and Gleason asked Rollins about the group dynamic.

Gleason: When you do the same tunes, (in) different performances, do they follow the same structure?

Rollins: Usually, although there is so much difference in the solos themselves that it's hard to say that it follows the same structure. As you know jazz is such an extemporaneous thing that we do a great deal of improvising right on the spot, but we usually maintain a framework within which all this is done so it's pretty well compact and the form is there. But within that form it's very free you know.

Gleason: So, if you did something as you were soloing this might change the whole way the group might perform the rest of the tune?

Rollins: Yes, it would. Yes, very definitely.

Gleason: Would that work as a feedback to you?

Rollins: Very definitely. And we get ideas as we go along and even though we might play the same song we might just put a little inflection here and inflection there which we might pick up from one of the other guys in the group and this would change the whole color so to speak of the song. And this makes it very nice to play because it's a different experience each time...

Gleason: How about key? Do you ever change the key of a song?

Rollins: Yeah, we do that and we're just beginning to do a lot more of that. To play in keys which we might not have played in too much before.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>293</sup> Sonny Rollins, interview on "Sonny Rollins Quartet" *Ralph Gleason's Jazz Casual*, Telecast, Koch KOC-CD-8570, (1962).

The group was also able to form a cohesive sound and approach due to the frequency of their appearances together. In 1962 they performed a split-bill concert with John Lewis in the spring/early summer in New York. The concert review alluded to the improvisational experimentation that Rollins was developing:

The performance included some wild interpolations, several of which Rollins managed to fit in by a last-minute, witty unexpected alteration of a note or two. To my ear, he did not once lose his way, although a couple of times he did lose Hall - and that is nearly impossible to do, for the guitarist has one of the quickest harmonic ears out there.<sup>294</sup>

The group recorded a follow up album in New York in April and May of 1962, which was released the same year and included numerous additional instruments on several selections.<sup>295</sup> In the August 16, 1962 issue of *Downbeat Magazine*, Rollins was also the subject of a “Blindfold Test,” in which he expressed some interesting thoughts on the group:

You know, speaking of drummers, up until quite recently, when our drummer began sounding like he does, I was seriously contemplating not using drums. The three of us, Jim Hall, Bob Cranshaw and myself — are all musicians of a certain level, and there is so much that we should be doing now that we haven’t been able to do because we’re always having to go

back and show a drummer how to play correctly with us. I know I can sustain without that.<sup>296</sup>

Rollins may have been alluding to the fact that drummer Ben Riley had recently departed the group and was replaced by Ornette Coleman’s drummer, Billy Higgins. Cranshaw

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<sup>294</sup> Martin Williams, “Caught in the Act: Sonny Rollins/John Lewis” *Downbeat*, 5 July 1962, 38.

<sup>295</sup> Lord, “TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>296</sup> Leonard Feather, “Blindfold Test: Sonny Rollins, Part Two” *Downbeat*, 16 August 1962, 35.

also recalled both the pleasure of working with Higgins, and the difficulties that accompanied his drug habit:

Swinging. Just had a nice free-swinging beat. What he felt was outstanding... the feel that he had, it was always good: it was consistent, it was consistent. Every time you played with him. And a funny, funny guy. 'Cause we would go places with Sonny and he didn't have drums. He had pawned his drums; he could play on this table here and play and you got the feel that he was playing on his drums. I mean he never lost that kind of, (he was) one of the few people, he never lost that kind of thing to me... The times we worked together I guess were very difficult 'cause he was stung, he was strung out. So, trying to get the best out of him or know what his physical thing might do from day to day... you know was sometimes difficult. But when he sat down on the drums you knew you had a groove. He was into it.<sup>297</sup>

The September 13, 1962 issue of *Downbeat* includes a special section that includes an illustration of Rollins' group in a performance at McKie's Disc Jockey Lounge. The photo displays Rollins, Hall, Cranshaw, and Higgins, with a special guest, Gene Ammons.<sup>298</sup> The date of this performance is not made clear in the photograph. On Sunday, July 8, 1962, the group also performed at the Newport Jazz Festival with special guest, vocalist Abbey Lincoln.<sup>299</sup> The performance was extremely well-received:

Sonny Rollins' tenor sax, flashing the sun's rays brilliantly as he tilted it to one side, seemed to be on fire, and his solos had the same blinding effect. They were well constructed, moving chunks of sound with a clarity and vividness that grabbed the audience. He played with an inexhaustible energy that got to you. "Complete command," was the way one critic described his afternoon set.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).=

<sup>298</sup> George Roth, "A Night at McKie's" *Downbeat*, 13 September 1962, 22.

<sup>299</sup> Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 268.

<sup>300</sup> Burt Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History* (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), 97.

Indeed, as Burt Goldblatt observed, Rollins' energy and ability to play extended solos had become legendary by this point. Drummer Roy McCurdy, who played extensively with Rollins and Cranshaw starting in 1963, described this in an interview.

It was times we'd be playing, and I look up at the clock and fifteen-twenty minutes had gone by on the same song and I knew we had at least another thirty minutes on this same song. Up to forty minutes to play on. He played long; it was just the three of us. He was known for playing long. And maybe he would play like a medley of songs, but sometimes he'd play just one song. But if he played several songs in one set he'd go through 'em and then come back at the end of the set and review 'em. He never forgot in that whole hour what he played. So yeah, we played a long time. It was known when you got on the stand with him, you're gonna play a long time. I got very strong on that gig. Just playing. Because stamina wise and everything he was a strong player.<sup>301</sup>

Rollins himself acknowledged his stamina and his tendency to play extended solos in a later interview:

Many people have said that I have a lot of energy, which I do, because I'm playing for the music. For instance, I played a three-hour set one night in a nightclub, and they were trying to get us off the stage to turn the house over. In other words, I'm playing and thinking about trying to get the music across and nothing else. Time doesn't matter. Maybe a lot of the younger cats might not have that same energy. I've found that a lot of musicians I played with don't have the same kind of incentive. I thought it might be because I was who I am and they were working for me, so I was supposed to have more incentive than they did.<sup>302</sup>

In the midst of all of this activity performing and travelling with Rollins, the group returned to New York to record a follow up album. On the same day as one of the Rollins sessions, Cranshaw and Hall went into Nola Studios with Walter Perkins for a session led by Billy Taylor on May 8-10.<sup>303</sup> Apparently the session had been developing for some time:

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<sup>301</sup> Roy McCurdy, personal interview (Stanford, CA: 17 July 2018).

<sup>302</sup> Hugh Wyatt, *Sonny Rollins: Meditating on a Riff*. (New York: Kamama Books, 2018) 170-171.

<sup>303</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

The preparation for this record album started several years ago in Chicago. While giving a lecture on jazz at Northwestern University, I was asked to demonstrate some of the points I had been making verbally by playing a few examples on the piano. I said okay and was immediately joined by two enthusiastic young students whose instruments “just happened” to be handy. They politely asked if they might sit in and when I said yes, I was quite unprepared for the sensitivity and musicianship they displayed. Instead of the few choruses of the blues I had intended to play, I ended up playing a more vigorous and artistically rewarding set than any that I played at the club where I was appearing. Needless to say, I was very impressed with the talents of Walter Perkins and Bob Cranshaw.<sup>304</sup>

This group was, as the album title suggests, an informal gathering of musicians that went their separate ways following the session. Cranshaw would, however, return to Taylor’s groups for extensive work a few years later. Another reason for the group’s dissolution was that Perkins was injured in a car accident in the summer of 1962, and his injuries prevented him from playing until winter of the same year. Cranshaw and Hall were still finishing their tenure with Rollins, and Cranshaw would not reconvene with Taylor until the 1970s.

On May 31 and August 23, 1962, Cranshaw recorded with Barry Harris and Clifford Jarvis for Harris’ album *Chasin’ The Bird*, on Riverside Records.<sup>305</sup> Cranshaw and Jarvis are noted by Ira Gitler for their accompaniment. “... their (Cranshaw and Jarvis) main function here is as supporting players. This assignment they carry out with great sensitivity.”<sup>306</sup>

When listening to Cranshaw’s solos with Harris, particularly on “Stay Right with It” from *Chasin’ The Bird*, it is clear that he and Harris do not quite find the same groove.

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<sup>304</sup> Billy Taylor, notes to Billy Taylor Quartet, *Impromptu*. (1962) LP, Mercury MG20722.

<sup>305</sup> Lord, “TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>306</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Barry Harris Trio, *Chasin the Bird* (1962), LP Riverside RLP435.

Cranshaw commented on the difference between his approach, which is more on top of the beat, and Harris', which he felt was more laid-back.

... I didn't like for it to start slumping. Again, because we all play different. That's like the difference with Barry Harris... Barry Harris is gonna be more laid back 'cause his things is gonna be bebop, you know. McCoy Tyner is going to be a whole different approach; it's going to be more modern...<sup>307</sup>

This is not to say that Cranshaw did not enjoy the work; he behaved professionally and often negotiated these stylistic differences with other artists.

... guys play together when we get called; we just play. You may have a different feel. I learned a lot about different feels. Barry is more laid back. I gotta lean. I didn't want to do everything with Barry because I wanted to make sure that our things mesh.<sup>308</sup>

In *Three Wishes*, the book of quotes compiled by the baroness Pannonica de Koenigswarter, Cranshaw hopes, in addition to his wishes for musical ability and a happy family, that Barry Harris would play with him. "(I wish) that Barry Harris would go to Chicago with us for two weeks!"<sup>309</sup> Cranshaw recorded extensively with Harris during this period; in addition to Harris's *Chasin the Bird*, they appeared together as sidemen on albums with Sonny Red, Lee Morgan, and Sal Nistico.

On July 26 and August 28, 1962, Cranshaw recorded on two sessions for the Slide Hampton album *Explosion!: The Sound of Slide Hampton* on Atlantic Records.<sup>310</sup> The album featured a ten-piece group which played Hampton's arrangements of standards, original compositions, and popular songs. The notes mention the attempt to generate

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<sup>307</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>308</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>309</sup> Pannonica de Koenigswarter, *Three Wishes* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Books, 2008), 208.

<sup>310</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"



broad appeal in both the choice of material and the arrangements.

... an ensemble like this... offers (a) wide variety of materials, colorful and well-distributed solo work, and a sophisticated but not-too-cerebral sound. In line with the wide spectrum of musical interest of their fans, Slide and his group have prepared an attractive program... It ranges over quite a bit of territory...<sup>311</sup>

Cranshaw does not play any solos on the album, which mostly features ensemble playing and short solos by several of the band members.

In July of 1962, between the sessions for Hampton's album, Cranshaw joined Sonny Rollins for an engagement at the Village Gate in New York.<sup>312</sup> The group included Rollins, Cranshaw, Higgins, and cornetist Don Cherry. Several evenings were recorded and released as the album *Our Man in Jazz* on RCA Victor.<sup>313</sup> The music on the album represented a departure for Rollins and the group in terms of style and approach. In the notes to the album, producer George Avakian described the music as:

... unusually spontaneous even for an artist as freely creative as Sonny Rollins. Their shape, length, and internal structure are completely unrehearsed and are the product of the instant reaction of each member of the quartet to each moment of spontaneous creation. Harmonies, as well as rhythms and the normal bar-by-bar construction of a composition, are altered on the spot in a fascinating demonstration of collective improvisation by four sensitively attuned musicians.<sup>314</sup>

This approach was both inspirational and intimidating to the musicians in Rollins' group; especially to Hall and Cranshaw, who were more experienced with straight ahead concepts than with the direction the group began to pursue. As Jim Hall described:

It was a tremendously rewarding year with Sonny. I learned more from him and was inspired more by him than anyone in recent years. He is such a

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<sup>311</sup> Gary Kramer, notes to Slide Hampton, *Explosion! The Sound of Slide Hampton*, (1962) LP, Atlantic Records, Atl SD1396.

<sup>312</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> George Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins *Our Man in Jazz (1962)*, LP, RCA Victor LPM2612.

virtuoso that it scares you to be on the same bandstand. I felt I had to practice every day so that I wouldn't let Sonny down. I produced because I was scared of Sonny. The way he can project to an audience musically is fantastic. And he can sail in and out of different keys at random and breakneck tempos... Rollins is so good that he leaves you with your mouth open. His hold on form, especially in a long solo, really floors me. I don't know if it's conscious or unconscious, but it's there.<sup>315</sup>

Rollins was keenly aware of the new style of jazz that Ornette Coleman represented. In addition to hiring Cherry and Higgins, two Coleman sidemen, Rollins issued the following response in the August 1962 *Downbeat Magazine* "Blindfold Test," when questioned about Coleman's piece, "Folk Tale."

As you know, Leonard, I'm in favor of Ornette and many of the things he has done. Like me and many other horn players, he's still in search of the complete ability to express everything he feels - the technique to project what he thinks... I see enough validity there to give my nod of approval... I can still see in his figures a certain quality that was exemplified by Bird.<sup>316</sup>

Rollins' group also played another extended engagement at McKie's Disc Jockey Lounge in Chicago in December of 1962.<sup>317</sup> Although playing with Rollins was a large boost to his career, Cranshaw was not as interested in Rollins' new style. He described the *Our Man in Jazz* session this way.

That was a rough thing. Not the date in itself, but I'm not a free form player. I like form. I'm more locked into form. Playing free: For me, I always said I'd rather be in bondage. I don't want to be that free. It took some time for me to make up my mind whether I could really get into it when Sonny started to do that. Sonny's a master, so it was just another transition for him. He's checking out something different. At that point, I'm still into changes. I'm trying to make sure I'm playing the right changes to the tune. My head was more there at that time. So, it became a little difficult for me. I don't know whether I left because Sonny started to get into the free form thing. I left the group for a minute because I didn't feel that I could be true to what

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<sup>315</sup> Don Nelsen, "The Unassuming Jim Hall," *Downbeat*, 1 July 1962, 20-21.

<sup>316</sup> Feather, "Blindfold Test: Sonny Rollins part Two" 35.

<sup>317</sup> Anonymous, "Ad Lib: Chicago" *Downbeat*, 20 December 1962, 48.

was happening, musically, because I wasn't there. I wasn't there yet. I didn't want to put it down.<sup>318</sup>

The reception of the album was mixed and offered both hope and skepticism.

... Rollins & Co., it would seem to have jettisoned order and formal discipline in favor of an approach stressing emotional continuity. It only partially works here, but when it does it can be most arresting, as may be readily heard in the opening to "Oleo" and in other spots on the disc, as in Cranshaw's solo on this number, where Rollins' wispy filaments of sound behind the bass line bring it out and set it off beautifully... Cranshaw and Higgins are especially sympathetic in their roles, both participating at true co-equal creative levels with the horn men. Listen, for an example of the superior quality of their work, to the final capitulation of the "Doxy" theme. Some inkling of the potentials of the group approach Rollins is working towards can be gathered from the last few moments of this piece, when the interplay attains a very high level. It can work but doesn't often in this album. The occasional glimpses, however, are most tantalizing.<sup>319</sup>

Jim Hall shared Cranshaw's sentiments regarding Rollins' new style of music and the direction the group was headed.

One thing I regret is that (when) we were out in California he started playing with Don Cherry. I had known Don and Ornette Coleman, and I loved that group. But I wasn't really ready to start playing that free jazz. I would love to try it again. (laughs) I didn't really fit in there too well. That was pretty much the end of my stay with Sonny except for occasional concerts and things.<sup>320</sup>

On October 17, 1962, Cranshaw recorded with Sal Nistico for his album *Comin' On Up* on Riverside Records.<sup>321</sup> In the notes to the recording, Gene Lees commented on how Cranshaw's career had begun to take off.

... Bob Cranshaw, a bassist I used to see in South Side sessions when I was living in Chicago... I seem to see him *everywhere* in New York, in clubs, on record dates, and he is beginning to be much respected."<sup>322</sup>

<sup>318</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>319</sup> Pete Welding, "Record Reviews: Sonny Rollins Our Man in Jazz," *Downbeat*, 31 March 1963, 31-32.

<sup>320</sup> Laclair, *An Exploration of Jim Hall's Guitar Stylings on the Album "The Bridge" by Sonny Rollins*, 193.

<sup>321</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>322</sup> Gene Lees, notes to Sal Nistico Quintet *Comin' on Up* (1962) LP, Riverside RM457.

The rhythm section of Cranshaw, Barry Harris, and Vinnie Ruggiero sound very comfortable together on the album; likely owing to the fact that Cranshaw had recorded with Harris and Ruggiero before, though not on the same session. Cranshaw and Ruggiero trade solos on the album's title track which showcases their easy rapport.

Cranshaw recorded with Joe Williams for the first time on October 25, 1962. This session only produced two tracks while the remainder of the album, *Joe Williams Accompanied by Jimmy Jones' Orchestra*, was recorded on April 10, 1963.<sup>323</sup> Junior Mance's trio, of which Cranshaw had become the regular bassist, became Williams' consistent backing group and performed with him often in 1963.<sup>324</sup>

The remainder of Cranshaw's 1962 calendar included several significant recordings, including the first time that Cranshaw recorded with a Hammond organ. The album was Johnny Hammond Smith's *Open House*, which included Thad Jones. Though this was the first time he had recorded with an organ, Cranshaw had worked with organists in Chicago clubs. He remembered that his first time playing electric bass was actually with an organ group:

I got this job in Chicago with an organ, guitar and tenor sax. The club owner saw me walk in with my string bass, and he said, "They're never going to hear that." We didn't amplify basses at that time, so I didn't know what to say. And he said, "I have a bass guitar and an amplifier in the back. Can you play it?" And I said, "Sure," because I needed the money. So, I played it, but I didn't think about it because it was a one-night situation.<sup>325</sup>

In early-1963, on February 27, Cranshaw returned to the studio with Sonny Rollins for a session that was never issued. The group included Rollins, Cranshaw, Don

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<sup>323</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Birnbaum, "Electric Flashback: Bassists Bob Cranshaw & Steve Swallow Celebrate their Plugged-In Ways," 27.

Cherry, and Billy Higgins, who were the members of the group from the Village Gate performances in 1962.

The Junior Mance Trio, which included Cranshaw and Roker, had earned a solid reputation through their work with Joe Williams, Billie Poole, and through their own albums. They then recorded together on June 17 and 18 with Chicago singer Irene Kral for her album *Better Than Anything* on Ava Records.<sup>326</sup> Thanks to the frequency and variety of the trio's work, the group is extremely tight and possesses a heightened musical sensitivity that is especially evident on this recording. The liner notes also show an excellent set of photos of Cranshaw, Roker, and Mance at the session.

Cranshaw performed in Joe Williams' band at the Newport Jazz Festival on July 5, 1963, and the date was recorded for a live album.<sup>327</sup> Williams commented in the liner notes to the album: "Listen to that rhythm section!... Those guys were in there that night... They sure made me feel like singin' that night."<sup>328</sup> Williams made a significant musical impact on Cranshaw, especially his consistency:

Joe could do everything. He could sing a ballad, any tune, he's one of the few people, anything that he wanted to sing he could sing. He had the voice, he had the range, he had the presence to really carry it off, you know. And I just remember some of the places that we used to go to Toronto. We worked there a lot. And in the audience would be Oscar Peterson and his trio. And they'd enjoy it. I mean we would be cooking you know. I mean it was just an honor. I never felt that our performance was not worthy of whatever, because it was so consistent. It was just great. Every night I couldn't wait for Joe to hit the stand. Because some of the tunes were just gorgeous.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Tommy Wolf, notes to Irene Kral with the Junior Mance Trio, *Better Than Anything* (1963), LP, Ava Records A33.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> George Avakian, notes to Joe Williams, *Joe Williams at Newport '63* (1963) LP, RCA Victor LPM2762.

<sup>329</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

However, at the 1963 Newport festival, some audience members did not initially enjoy Williams' performance, as Burt Goldblatt observed:

Among the many problems Friday evening were the constrictions placed on some of the artists by RCA Victor and Columbia records. Part of the program was being recorded on stereo equipment, and the recording companies demanded new material... Vocalist Joe Williams ran into similar problems. Part of the first half of his program contained a number of new tunes and arrangements. The musicians backing him were all of a high caliber, but the sparks couldn't fly under those circumstances. It was a long closing set, eleven numbers long, and although there were some fine moments, pianist Junior Mance backing with his trio on "Without a Song," and Clark Terry on flugelhorn on "April in Paris," much of the program lacked the proper fire.<sup>330</sup>

Critically, the set was very highly received, with a four-star review in *Downbeat*.<sup>331</sup> Cranshaw recalled his time with Williams as being particularly formative, not only musically, as it also taught him things about how to behave professionally.

I mean Joe, I grew up on Joe Williams. I mean I can say as a young guy, I was young at that time and it was just right for me. Because Joe's stuff was very structured. But he was such a professional. We would get on the stage and we were swinging. I mean the music felt so good. Every night it was just very consistent. And the trio was Junior Mance and Mickey Roker. And we had a good time with each other, but it was a thrill to play with Joe Williams because I just grew up. I mean I became a man with Joe Williams. He gave me that foundation you know and how to greet people, how to be, and not only that he introduced me to some of the most influential people in my life... I mean it was incredible you know. It felt so good I wanted to scream; it was just that great. But Joe was very patient with me as a young player, and talking to me, and trying to keep me from running all over the place. I was married, and to keep my family thing. I mean he was really; he was instrumental in me becoming a man I mean I feel.<sup>332</sup>

Cranshaw was offered another exciting opportunity at the 1963 festival when he was asked to perform with a group led by McCoy Tyner. This was proposed on the day of

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<sup>330</sup> Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 101-102.

<sup>331</sup> Anonymous, "Record Reviews: *Joe Williams: Live at Newport '63*" *Downbeat*, 26 March 1964, 32.

<sup>332</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

the festival by producer Bob Theile, and the musicians that he assembled had not rehearsed or played together at all; in fact, some of the members had never even met before.<sup>333</sup> The album's "jam session" organization is evidenced by the informal sound as the rhythm section swings from the beginning, thanks to the strong rhythmic foundation from each member. Burt Goldblatt observed the dynamic performance and was duly impressed by the group.

Friday afternoon was billed as "New Faces in Jazz." The faces that held your attention were in pianist McCoy Tyner's trio, with Mickey Roker on drums and Bob Cranshaw on bass. McCoy crackled with eagerness. It was such a pleasure to hear a group playing with one mind. His solos on "All of You" were marked by moments of tenderness and fire and seemed to evolve from an inner necessity.<sup>334</sup>

Cranshaw had heard Tyner with Coltrane's group, and he commented on the feeling that resulted:

McCoy was almost like the bass player. He kept the time, to me. He kept the chordal thing so that whatever the structure, wherever they went, it was cool, and it was exciting to hear Coltrane live. You would end up screaming because it felt so good. McCoy's thing to me – he laid the shit down. He gave them a chance to do what they do. He played solos, he did everything else, but his comping was like an orchestra.<sup>335</sup>

Cranshaw was familiar with Tyner's playing from an extended engagement which placed Rollins' group and Coltrane's group on a split bill in the same club.

Listening to the band was a bitch. And the places we played; the clubs would be packed! So, you know you got a chance to hear a lot of it nightly. I'd hear Trane probably nightly. He and Sonny worked opposite each other; it was just a joy.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> Willis Conover, notes to McCoy Tyner, *Live at Newport '63* (1962) LP, Impulse A-48, (E)IMPL8018.

<sup>334</sup> Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*

<sup>335</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>336</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

Cranshaw also noted the freedom allowed when playing with Tyner's strong rhythmic comping.

I knew if I played with McCoy I was freer 'cause McCoy is going in another direction, so it gave me a chance to be a lot freer, play time but I didn't have to do it in the same way, play time but I didn't have to suggest the same kind of things...<sup>337</sup>

In early 1963 Cranshaw played on an album led by Antonio "Chocolate" Diaz called *Eso Es Latin Jazz... Man!* on Audiofidelity Enterprises.<sup>338</sup> The album featured Duke Pearson as composer and arranger, as well as Walter Perkins and Joe Henderson.<sup>339</sup> Though the album was not well-reviewed,<sup>340</sup> it represented the first time that Cranshaw recorded with Joe Henderson.<sup>341</sup>

On July 15 Cranshaw recorded the first of several sessions for a new Sonny Rollins album.<sup>342</sup> This time Cranshaw and Rollins were joined by Paul Bley, Roy McCurdy, and legendary saxophonist Coleman Hawkins. Hawkins had joined Rollins briefly onstage at the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival and this meeting spawned the album *Sonny Meets Hawk*.<sup>343</sup> Cranshaw appeared at the 1963 Newport Festival with Joe Williams and McCoy Tyner but did not perform with Rollins. Henry Grimes played bass with Rollins at the festival and on half of the *Sonny Meets Hawk* sessions.<sup>344</sup> This was another foray into Rollins' explorations of freedom in music. Cranshaw was joined in the

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<sup>337</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>338</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Pete Welding, "Record Reviews Antonio (Chocolate) Diaz Mena: Eso Es Latin Jazz... Man!," *Downbeat Magazine*, 30 January, 1964, 26.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

<sup>342</sup> Lord, "TJD- Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>343</sup> George Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins & Co. with Coleman Hawkins, Guest Artist, *Sonny Meets Hawk!* (1963) LP, RCA Victor LPM712.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.



rhythm section by pianist Paul Bley and drummer Roy McCurdy, who were both new to Rollins. Cranshaw and McCurdy had previously worked together at the Five Spot with vocalist Betty Carter.<sup>345</sup> In the 1990 reissue of these sessions, Peter Keepnews wrote,

For Rollins, who in his restless search for new horizons has been flirting with the jazz avant-garde, this meant pulling out all the stops and exploring the outer limits of harmony, rhythm, and even sound; listen, in particular, to the eerie, high-pitched squeals he emits over and under Hawkins toward the end of 'Lover Man.'<sup>346</sup>

Rollins described his approach to playing with Hawkins as:

... a matter of trying to be really worthy of being there. With these great musicians, it's a matter of having great respect for them. You want to represent yourself and do the best for the music rather than trying to knock the other guy out. They all have something important to play; they all have something valid to say. Neither one could knock the other out, at least in the minds of real music people listening.<sup>347</sup>

Drummer Roy McCurdy recalled both admiration and a competitive spirit coming from Rollins.

That (record) became... really something, kind of a classic record. Kind of a cult record. Everybody talks about that album. But it was kind of a duel in the studio between those two horn players, they were both playing their butts off, but they were kind of dueling each other. But Sonny was almost imitating Hawkins in some places.<sup>348</sup>

The resulting music was some of Rollins' most abstract, and Cranshaw remembered that playing with Bley was especially difficult:

It was different for me. It wasn't easy for me to do. But again, playing by ear, I didn't go in with any preconceived anything. What I hear, that's where I'm going... Yeah, it's out, but we had a good time. My thing was, "This is the way he plays, so get used to it. Try to see how you fit, or what can you

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<sup>345</sup> Roy McCurdy, personal interview (Stanford, CA: 17 July 2018).

<sup>346</sup> Peter Keepnews, notes to Sonny Rollins, *All the Things You Are (1963-1963)* (1990) CD, Bluebird/BMG Music, 2179-2-RB.

<sup>347</sup> Jon Pareles, "Pop/Jazz; It's Rollins Vs. Marsalis In a Duel at Carnegie," *The New York Times*, 19 May 1989, Section C 20.

<sup>348</sup> Roy McCurdy, personal interview (Stanford, CA: 17 July 2018).

make fit with what he's doing because he knows what he's doing." It wasn't like he was strange. He knew!<sup>349</sup>

Roy McCurdy, who had recently begun playing with Rollins, played at the Newport Festival and performed on the entirety of *Sonny Meets Hawk!*, along with both Grimes and Cranshaw. For his part, McCurdy was relieved when Cranshaw returned to play with Rollins.

He was the nicest guy, I loved him, his attitude, you know. He had this beautiful smile, he was always really friendly, all the time. Every time you see him you get a hug; it was really beautiful. He was a pleasure to work with, it was never a hassle. I was so glad when him and Ron came on the band because it changed the whole feeling. Not only the playing but the personal feeling between the musicians because Henry was hard to get along with.<sup>350</sup>

McCurdy also remembered that Rollins had a similar reaction when Cranshaw returned. "And when he (Cranshaw) came on the band with Sonny, he just fell in love with him. He loved Bob."<sup>351</sup>

Despite these positive feelings, Cranshaw found it difficult to go in the musical direction that Rollins was seeking. Cranshaw's difficult relationship with the avant-garde style that Rollins pursued in this period, combined with his reputation as a solid session player, led him to continually find other groups to play and record with. Cranshaw is characteristically self-effacing on this topic. "I just kinda fell from one place to another, not knowing why or where."<sup>352</sup> Cranshaw's feelings about the music and respect for Rollins made him decide to play in Williams' group instead.

Sonny's group at this time we were playing, I guess it was Don Cherry and Billy Higgins. And it was more free form. And although I enjoyed (it), I got a lot out of it, I didn't feel that I was really adequate for the role. I like to

<sup>349</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>350</sup> McCurdy, personal interview.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>352</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 27 June 2016).

play changes. I'm not a free form, you know, I need guidelines, restrictions, or whatever. I needed a more structured situation. So, I stayed with Sonny for a while, and it got kind of loose to me and I didn't want to put the music down that we were doing, it just was not exciting to me. But I knew Sonny, being the genius that he is, he was ready for that step. I wasn't ready for it emotionally. Musically I could have probably accepted it. But emotionally I didn't really feel good. And I didn't want players to feel like I was putting them on by just playing. I mean you know just anything; I just didn't feel right about. So, I left and went with Joe Williams to play the Blues. I needed to come back to what I was familiar with.<sup>353</sup>

Cranshaw and Rollins continued their association for decades. Although there were periods that the two would not work together, they remained friends. Musically, Rollins was explicit in his admiration of Cranshaw and his desire to work with him: "Bob is a steady player, and as abstract as I often like to get, I've always liked to contrast abstraction against something steady."<sup>354</sup> Sonny Rollins described Cranshaw's compatibility with his approach to music and was explicit in appreciation for Cranshaw's playing and consistency.

When I'm soloing, I don't want to hear anybody. I just want to hear the beat, the groove, the pocket. That's why I've always used Bob Cranshaw on bass, because of his strong foundational beat. With that steady pulse, I'm free to manipulate the time, do abstract improvisations or anything else I want to do.<sup>355</sup>

## Part V: 1963-1968

By the early 1960s Blue Note Records had become one of several important jazz imprints that were producing albums by young and established stars. One of its main contributors was the pianist, new producer, and A&R man Duke Pearson.<sup>356</sup> After the

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<sup>353</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>354</sup> Ted Panken, "Approaching Enlightenment," *Downbeat*, February 2001, 27.

<sup>355</sup> Ted Panken, "The Big Event," *Downbeat*, December 2007, 47.

<sup>356</sup> Richard Cook, *Blue Note Records: The Biography*. (Boston, MA. Justin, Charles & Co., 2004), 165-166.

death of Ike Quebec who had been working both as a musician and as an artistic consultant Blue Note was in search of a musician that could liaise with musicians and company executives.<sup>357</sup> Pearson was given much freedom in this regard. “I was on my own, entirely on my own... (I was allowed to record anybody and) anything I wanted to do. I liked it and that was it.”<sup>358</sup>

Cranshaw had recorded with Pearson on his album *Hush!* in 1961, and on an album that Pearson arranged for Antonio Diaz in July of 1963. The Pearson-led Diaz ensemble was nearly identical to the group that Pearson assembled for trumpet player Johnny Coles’ Blue Note album *Little Johnny C*, which was recorded in the same month.<sup>359</sup> Pearson credited Cranshaw in the liner notes he wrote for the album for:

...sturdy bass lines... Cranshaw remains solid as a rock... Cranshaw and LaRoca steadily carry the romp through the piano solo and stout phraseology...<sup>360</sup>

Pearson’s position at Blue Note as an artist, producer, arranger and A&R man, combined with his affinity for Cranshaw meant that there would be numerous opportunities for Cranshaw to record with the top new jazz artists on Blue Note. Cranshaw was not limited to Blue Note albums, though, he also recorded extensively for other labels during this time. In 1964 alone, Cranshaw recorded on Blue Note, Riverside, Verve, RCA Victor, Prestige, Jazz Workshop, Atlantic, and several other smaller imprints.<sup>361</sup> *Little Johnny “C”* was Cranshaw’s first of what would become dozens of

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<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> Bob Rusch, “Interview with Duke Pearson,” *Cadence*, September 1980, 13.

<sup>359</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>360</sup> Duke Pearson, notes to Johnny Coles, *Little Johnny C* (1963), LP, Blue Note Records BLP 4144.

<sup>361</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

recordings he made for Blue Note.<sup>362</sup> Perhaps more impressive is that this was also the first time Cranshaw recorded at Rudy Van Gelder's studio in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: a studio he would go on to visit ninety-six times in his career.<sup>363</sup>

On September 12, 1963, Cranshaw recorded with Pepper Adams for his album *Pepper Adams Plays The Compositions of Charles Mingus*, on the Jazz Workshop label.<sup>364</sup> Cranshaw played on three tracks, while the remaining six tracks featured Paul Chambers on bass.<sup>365</sup> This was Cranshaw's first of many recordings with Hank Jones and Pepper Adams and his only recording with Dannie Richmond.<sup>366</sup>

On September 18, 1963, Cranshaw recorded with vibraphonist Johnny Lytle for his album *The Village Caller* on Riverside Records. Cranshaw was beginning to get more work as a session bassist; recording with groups in which he was not a full-time member. The notes to *The Village Caller* mention that Cranshaw joined Lytle's working group for the recording only.<sup>367</sup>

On September 23 of 1963 Cranshaw recorded with Nat Adderley for his album *Little Bighorn* on Riverside Records.<sup>368</sup> *Little Bighorn* also featured Junior Mance's trio which included Cranshaw and Roker with guest Kenny Burrell.<sup>369</sup> Burrell had previously worked with Mance's trio to back up singer Billie Poole.<sup>370</sup> Dan Morgenstern took a

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Alston Anderson, notes to Pepper Adams, *Pepper Adams Plays the Compositions of Charlie Mingus*, (1963) LP, Jazz Workshop, JW-018.

<sup>366</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>367</sup> Rob Reisner, notes to Johnny Lytle, *The Village Caller*, (1963) LP, Riverside Records, RLP 480.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

moment to recognize the rhythm section in the liner notes to *Little Bighorn*. He wrote:  
 “They all give fine support throughout...”<sup>371</sup>

Cranshaw’s next opportunity to record for Blue Note under Pearson’s direction was on Grant Green’s session for the album *Idle Moments*, which was recorded on November 4 and 15 1963.<sup>372</sup> The title track, written by Pearson, is a slow, solemn piece. John A. Tynan, in his piece for *Downbeat*, thought it reminiscent of “Slam Slam Blues,”<sup>373</sup> which was recorded in 1945 by Red Norvo, Charlie Parker, Slam Stewart and others. Perhaps a more fitting comparison of “Idle Moments” may be the piece “Loneliness,” which was recorded by Nat Adderley on his album *Little Bighorn*.<sup>374</sup>

Whatever the inspiration for “Idle Moments,” it was received warmly and received a four-star rating by Tynan in *Downbeat*.<sup>375</sup> The length of the song is explained by Pearson, who wrote the liner notes. Green mistook the song’s sixteen bar form for a thirty-two bar form; a mistake which effectively doubled the length of the song.<sup>376</sup> Producer Alfred Lion considered this take too long and booked another session to record a shortened version.<sup>377</sup> Part of the need for a shorter take was due to limitations of the capacity of the LP.<sup>378</sup> An LP can hold a maximum of approximately twenty-five minutes per side,<sup>379</sup> and it would be difficult to fit the nearly fifteen-minute “Idle Moments” with

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<sup>371</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to Nat Adderley, *Little Bighorn*, (1963) Riverside RLP (9)474.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

<sup>373</sup> John A. Tynan, “Record Reviews: Grant Green, Idle Moments,” *Downbeat*, 3 June 1965, 28.

<sup>374</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>375</sup> Tynan, “Record Reviews: Grant Green, Idle Moments”

<sup>376</sup> Duke Pearson, notes to Grant Green, *Idle Moments* (1963), LP Blue Note Records BLP4154.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>378</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Grant Green, *Idle Moments: RVG Edition* (1999), CD Blue Note Records CDP7-84154-2.

<sup>379</sup> Mumma, Gordon, Howard Rye, Barry Kernfeld, and Chris Sheridan. "Recording." *Grove Music Online*. (Online Version, 2003; Accessed 25 Sep. 2019)

the over twelve-minute version of “Nomad,” which was also on the album. “Idle Moments” was the last tune of the session and the take did not begin until after midnight.<sup>380</sup> Al Harewood, the drummer on the session, offered his take on the length of the piece:

This was a really happy date... I think we recorded longer than we should have because of this. I think it was the first time Joe Henderson and Bobby Hutcherson played together. I believe it was the first time we all recorded together, and Grant — the minute he put his fingers on that guitar, that was it. That’s how bad he was. He had so much soul.<sup>381</sup>

At the subsequent session, despite several attempts at recreating the feeling of the original take, the musicians and Lion were not satisfied, and the original version was issued.<sup>382</sup> Part of the difficulty may have also been Green’s drug problem. Cranshaw described his feelings about Green as mixed, due to his musical brilliance and personal demons.

Groove, groove, groove. Got a heavy pocket. It was wonderful working with Grant when we played. He was messed up... Well, he was on drugs. He was heavy. So, to catch him right... a lot of those things, more guys were getting high. More guys were on heroin at that time. But Grant, if you caught him at the right time, he could play. He was like a country guy to me, but he could play his butt off. We had a good time. It was nice playing with him. I enjoyed his company.<sup>383</sup>

The eventual success of *Idle Moments* certainly boosted Cranshaw’s career, and he began to record frequently for Blue Note almost immediately after the sessions for *Idle*

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<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/0-mo-9781561592630-e-2000371600>.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Sharony Andrews Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*, (San Francisco: Miller Freeman Books, 1999), 89.

<sup>382</sup> Mumma, Gordon, Howard Rye, Barry Kernfeld, and Chris Sheridan. "Recording." *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>383</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

*Moments* had concluded.<sup>384</sup> Between November of 1962 and January of 1963, Cranshaw recorded four albums for Blue Note alone.<sup>385</sup> Blumenthal observed Cranshaw's expanding role at Blue Note in the notes for the reissue of *Idle Moments*: "Cranshaw was in the midst of establishing himself as Lion's bassist of choice for less experimental sessions..."<sup>386</sup> Pearson also mentioned Cranshaw's role in the liner notes to the original release:

... I would like to give special credits and plaudits to the other two members of the rhythm section, bassist Bob Cranshaw and drummer Al Harewood. The firmness and consistency of their rhythm provide an excellent foundation for the development of interesting solos.<sup>387</sup>

Cranshaw recalled the Blue Note roster of this period as having an extraordinary number of great soloists.

... the solos were always good. One of the nice things about Blue Note, the people they had playing solos, the motherfuckers were bad. I mean it was incredible, so it was nice listening to them 'cause they were running through that shit, whether it was Hank or whoever, they had the shit down and it was wonderful cause with very little rehearsal we were to pull it off.<sup>388</sup>

Cranshaw also specifically enjoyed Green's playing on the Blue Note recordings from this period. Cranshaw said,

It was like (he was) listening to what the guitar (was) saying. The guitar seemed to have a voice that he wanted to hear... Grant was a very easy person to play with. He had a great feel.<sup>389</sup>

The high-quality music produced by Blue Note during this period masked a darker element; many of the jazz musicians working for the label were struggling with

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<sup>384</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

<sup>386</sup> Blumenthal, notes to Grant Green, *Idle Moments: RVG Edition*

<sup>387</sup> Pearson, notes to Grant Green, *Idle Moments*

<sup>388</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>389</sup> Andrews Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*, 92.



heroin addiction and other substance abuse problems. Sonny Rollins' hiatus from jazz clubs and other jazz musicians was in part motivated by a desire to get away from the temptation of drugs and alcohol which were prevalent in those environments. Grant Green was addicted to heroin at the time that *Idle Moments* was recorded, and his struggles were clear. Lou Donaldson described holding Grant Green's pay so he wouldn't spend it on heroin:

Yes, I kept the money and put it in my pocket because of his problem... But Grant would come by my house every day until finally I said, "Look Grant, fuck this. You take it." He came every day, sometimes twice a day. I took his money and put it in a bag and (said), "You've got it." I couldn't take it. Then he started bugging Blue Note. A guy told me he was down there every day to get some money. When we made a date, he never got paid because he owed the company. He'd go down there every day to get some money. And every time he got paid, he'd owe money.<sup>390</sup>

Other sources confirmed that Green's habit led him to borrow money from Blue Note against future recordings. Blue Note executive Alfred Lion's wife Ruth recalled: "Grant always needed money. They would argue about the money and they got okay with the money, and then he would laugh."<sup>391</sup> Kenny Rice, a drummer who worked with Green, remembered an interaction with Green's manager Leo Gooden:

He would laugh about it... He'd show us some statements from Blue Note Records, and they'd say, "Grant owed so and so something." After Grant would do a session, they sent Leo a statement saying that's what *he* owed them!<sup>392</sup>

Cranshaw even observed Green at the Blue Note offices, demanding an advance.

I just remember going there one day and Grant was there waving, ranting, really angry, wanting to rip the place apart, hoping they would give him some money... He didn't seem like he was a really educated guy, but he worked hard for his money and he wanted it. I guess he was trying to get an

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<sup>390</sup> Ibid, 101-104.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

advance. See, quite a few of the guys at that time were really strung out. It's not that they (Blue Note) didn't pay them, but it was always (that) he needed the money before we did the record date.<sup>393</sup>

Cranshaw recalled that conditions surrounding the sessions were sometimes desperate for many musicians dealing with drug addiction.

A lot of it was necessity, cause if you didn't make the date you didn't get paid that day. So, all of these things were to me very important with the guys 'cause we were all looking for a payday, I mean, we needed the money.<sup>394</sup>

Blue Note dates were unique because they had a policy of paying musicians to rehearse before the sessions.<sup>395</sup>

Well, especially with the Blue Note dates, we would have a rehearsal. It was funny because we would get paid for the rehearsals. So many guys were into drugs and different things, so many people were there because they needed that money. I don't remember if it was twenty bucks or something like that for the rehearsals.<sup>396</sup>

In an interview with Sharony Andrews Green in her Grant Green biography, Cranshaw reiterated this point:

Each guy would get like \$10 or \$15 for making the rehearsal... This was a nice situation 'cause that meant the guys had some money in their pockets. In (that) day, \$15 really meant something. It was an incentive to make the rehearsal.<sup>397</sup>

Andrews Green suggests that several of the Blue Note policies regarding payment raise questions about enabling substance abuse, and in her estimation the company was complicit in their artists' destructive behaviors. She writes: "How much Blue Note

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<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>395</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Andrews Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*, 104.

enabled their musicians is a dubious question.”<sup>398</sup> Cranshaw seemed to agree with Green’s belief:

Getting high was part of the environment... Alfred Lion and Frank Wolff knew that a lot of the guys were strung out... They had alcohol, (at the sessions) so the guys could drink, assuming they would just take a little bit at a time. They wanted you to be comfortable. A lot of the guys who recorded for Blue Note Records — not all of them, but there were a lot of them who were very, very talented — they were messed up. It didn’t make that much difference as long as they made it to the record dates and as long as they took care of business.<sup>399</sup>

For Green and other artists that struggled with addiction, money that flowed from Blue Note was spent directly on their habit. Cranshaw described how artists on the Blue Note label would routinely use their payments:

That was some money. We would come right back after the recording, and there was a drug store on 50th and Broadway that would cash our check for those who wanted to take it home. For the others, I guess they went out. I know this happened not only with Grant, but with Lee Morgan and all of ‘em. They would get high and whatever with the money they had and use it however they chose to use it. Sometimes the guys were messed up before we could even finish the dates. They would start to drink and by the time we finished the last tune, the guys would be on the floor.<sup>400</sup>

Though Green had disputes with Blue Note about payment, he may not have had many options outside of recording for the label, and certainly none that would have paid him in the same manner. Cranshaw observed that Green, like many jazz musicians who recorded for Blue Note, played only jazz and would not play any other styles. This exclusive focus on jazz meant that their work opportunities were limited by their specialization. This was not the case for Cranshaw, who embraced every opportunity presented to him.

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid., 105.

I was doing a little bit of everything... I was working with different singers — Barbara Streisand, Frank Sinatra, Lena Horne and all of these people, and Grant and some of the jazz players were just involved in the jazz thing. They were having a much harder time... See, Grant was not the kind of reader where he could ever be called into that kind of situation. He wasn't known in those circles. He was only known in the jazz circuit.<sup>401</sup>

For all of Green's shortcomings and personal demons, he was undeniably a significant artist. Cranshaw acknowledged Green's influence:

I don't think that Grant lived long enough to be really known. His thing was short-lived. All of a sudden, I look up and he's gone. By his being strung out, there were a lot of people who wouldn't call him. There were a lot of things he wasn't allowed to do. But Grant was a big influence in my musical biography of people.<sup>402</sup>

Cranshaw's next Blue Note date after *Idle Moments* was led by Grachan Moncur III. *Evolution* is an avant-garde album, and though it is not totally free, stylistically it was a great departure in style from *Idle Moments*, which is fairly straight ahead. Cranshaw's presence on *Evolution* contradicts the assertion made by Bob Blumenthal in the notes to the reissue of *Idle Moments*, which mentioned that Blue Note used Cranshaw for straight-ahead dates.<sup>403</sup> In the liner notes to the RVG edition of *Evolution*, Blumenthal actually corrects the record on his previous statement from his notes to *Idle Moments* regarding Cranshaw's stylistic strengths (his earlier statement is not untrue, just incomplete). In the notes to RVG reissue of *Evolution* he wrote:

As for Bob Cranshaw, isn't it a long past time when his ability to sound right regardless of context receives its due? Cranshaw was the perfect bassist when he assisted Morgan exactly one month later in creating the soul classic "The Sidewinder"; and, whether plucking or using the bow, he is the perfect bassist here.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>403</sup> Blumenthal, notes to Grant Green, *Idle Moments: RVG Edition*.

<sup>404</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Grachan Moncur III, *Evolution; RVG Edition* (2008), CD, Blue Note Records CDP7-84153-2.

The music on the date is firmly in the realm of experimental jazz, with frantic tempo changes, harmonic and melodic freedom, and group improvisation; however, all of the musicians on the date were also well versed in conventional straight-ahead jazz.

Writer Pete Welding described the results on the recording as:

... men who in the past have demonstrated a mastery of conventional post-bop playing styles, and in this set they have synthesized elements of the new expressionism into their playing and writing. What results is a richly textured music that alloys the familiar with the innovative daring of the avant-garde... All told this is a provocative collection — as much for what promise it holds as for the virtues of the music itself... While the set is not always as adventurous as one might like, it is scarcely complacent, stereotyped music. These men take chances, and they go out on a limb to take them.<sup>405</sup>

“Monk in Wonderland,” from *Evolution* was used in the “Al Grey: Blindfold Test” in the May 6, 1965 issue of *Downbeat*. Grey generally liked the music and of Cranshaw he said: “And Bob Cranshaw — he’s another one of those heavy bass players, so this tune came off well.”<sup>406</sup>

Cranshaw was working frequently not just with the legendary figures in jazz, but also with the top of the class of young musicians on the New York jazz scene. He described feeling like an outsider for various reasons but maintained his strict aversion to the rampant drug use that was common in the jazz scene at the time.

They all had a nice connection. I was kind of the outsider... ‘Cause I didn’t hang. No, I didn’t hang in clubs, I had a really good time when I was with the guys, I loved all of them and we all had a good time, but I never hung with Lee Morgan. I never hung with Hank Mobley... I had a family. I couldn’t afford to be going through the bullshit. You know drugs may have been part of it. You know, I just didn’t want to get involved. I didn’t have the money. I didn’t go to the clubs. I rarely went out to catch many of the

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<sup>405</sup> Pete Welding, “Record Reviews: Grachan Moncur III *Evolution*” *Downbeat*, 24 September 1964, 29.

<sup>406</sup> Leonard Feather, “Blindfold Test: Al Grey”, *Downbeat*, 6 May 1965, 35.

groups. I would see them on a record date and that was kind of it. I don't know, I can't figure out to this fuckin' day how I made it through because you know me and Mickey would hang out or me and a couple of drummers would hang you know, but. Just generally speaking I didn't do that much hanging. You know I would drive guys; I would drive Hank and them some of the guys home at night, but they were hangers. They wanted to hang you know they were kind of like whatever the music business was about at that time you would never go to a club and usually find me sitting I just didn't go... It was good for me 'cause I was into so much other shit. You know what I'm sayin'? I never thought that I needed that. And I think one of the nice things, I appreciate cause I think that guys themselves appreciated that I wasn't hanging that I didn't get involved in a lot of things, I could just see the guys eyes when they would speak to me you know, yeah "I'm glad you're not into this"...<sup>407</sup>

Despite Cranshaw's feelings of being a social outsider, he was completely at home in any musical situation. These sentiments were shared by both the musicians that he played with and the music critics. As Welding wrote in his review of the album:

Particularly outstanding are Cranshaw and Williams, who set up between them a stunning, exhortatory sprung rhythm that drives these pieces along.<sup>408</sup>

Moncur himself echoed these feelings in the liner notes to *Evolution*, and grouped Cranshaw together with all of the musicians on the date:

Bob Cranshaw and Lee Morgan and Jackie McLean, I've known them all for a long time, and I've played with them all so many times, I feel we all really understand each other's music. I'm happy about the way everybody played on this date. It was a damn good session, really, and I don't think anybody could have contributed more.<sup>409</sup>

Richard Havers summed up the album by stating:

The musicianship throughout is precise and defined; if it were not, this album could have degenerated into the kind of avant-garde chaos that can

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<sup>407</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>408</sup> Pete Welding, "Record Reviews: Grachan Moncur III *Evolution*"

<sup>409</sup> A.B. Spellman, notes to Grachan Moncur III, *Evolution* (1963), LP Blue Notes Records BLP4153.

give jazz a bad name. The disciplined approach is apparent... *Downbeat* was also right about the promise it holds as a collection...<sup>410</sup>

On the recording Cranshaw made immediately after *Evolution*, he again showed his remarkable ability to adapt to any musical situation by backing Milt Jackson on the album *Live at the Village Gate*.<sup>411</sup> It was recorded on December 9 of 1963<sup>412</sup> and the engagement itself seemed to go largely unnoticed by *Downbeat* at the time, as Jackson's performance is not listed in the usual sources of "Where and When", "Caught in the Act", or "Ad Lib" (all recurring segments in *Downbeat* which would chronicle various live engagements and recording news). The night may have been a one-off, though given the tight sound of the band, it's likely that they rehearsed the music before the performance. Ira Gitler mentions in the album notes that the group is not an established band:

I was at the Village Gate when this recording was done but I can honestly say I didn't realize what a persuasive set of performances had been committed to tape until I heard this record. What was somewhat lost in the hubbub and excitement of the huge Monday night crowd was channeled, along with the excitement but minus the hubbub, into Riverside's microphones. The group causing all the excitement is not one that ordinarily performs as a unit, but the men are certainly on familiar terms...<sup>413</sup>

Apparently, the album was not released right away, because, although it was recorded in 1963, in the liner notes to the album Gitler mentions the professional accomplishments of several band members as of 1966.

... Milt Jackson who, in August 1966, won his eleventh consecutive victory in the *Downbeat* International Critics Poll... Jimmy is currently (1966)

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<sup>410</sup> Richard Havers, *Blue Note Records: Uncompromising Expression* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2014), 229.

<sup>411</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Milt Jackson, *Live at the Village Gate* (1966), LP, Riverside Records RM495.

gracing the quintet of Art Farmer... Albert 'Tootie' Heath has been in Sweden in 1966...<sup>414</sup>

There is mention of the album being recorded in the January 16 , 1964 issue of *Downbeat*.<sup>415</sup> Two clues exist as to the reason for such a long delay between the recording date and the release: first Bill Grauer, president of Riverside Records passed away on December 15, 1963,<sup>416</sup> subsequently, Riverside Records filed for bankruptcy in the summer of 1964.<sup>417</sup> The article describes the seriousness of Riverside's troubles and lists the various debtors that were owed money. It also showed that a portion of Riverside's \$3,056,000 in liabilities (against \$1,300,000 in assets) was \$15,000 owed to Milt Jackson.<sup>418</sup> This could have been another obstacle that held up the release of the session. Whatever the reason for the delay, there is no cause given, nor mention of the financial problems at Riverside in Gitler's notes to *Milt Jackson: Live at The Village Gate*.

As with many of the albums which Cranshaw recorded, Gitler comments on his musical abilities in the liner notes. He also mentions Cranshaw's professional versatility, which would have been equally accurate in both 1963 when the album was recorded, and in 1966 when the album was released:

Bob Cranshaw is one the busiest free-lance bassists in New York and for good reason. He is in great demand for recording and club engagements because he combines excellent technical equipment with the intangible ingredients that help comprise soul.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Anonymous, "Strictly Ad Lib: New York," *Downbeat*, 16 January 1964, 43.

<sup>416</sup> Anonymous, "News," *Downbeat*, 30 January 1964, 9.

<sup>417</sup> Anonymous, "News," *Downbeat*, 27 August 1964, 8.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Gitler, notes to Milt Jackson, *Live at the Village Gate*.



Gitler's observation of Cranshaw's flexibility and versatility is a topic that Cranshaw would repeatedly emphasize in interviews throughout his career. One of the key elements to understanding Cranshaw is recognizing the importance of keeping an open mind musically.<sup>420</sup> His philosophy was that jazz is not the only important music. Even though Cranshaw was a member of a community of elite jazz musicians, he was by no means an elitist with respect to jazz as a superior art form.

...they were only looking for jazz shit. I was lookin' for shit. See, which was the difference. They didn't want to play with (certain, non-jazz) people, I just wanted to play. So, if I got a call... I got calls from other people, that most of those (jazz) people never, would probably never, have worked with you know! (laughs) See I was ready to go! And that's how the Joe Raposo (of Sesame Street) and all of these other guys came in. I was just open, I just wanted to play. Jazz, I love, but with three kids, fuck it. That ain't the only thing. I didn't go into "This is the only music..." My thing is I'm from Chicago, I'm from blues, I heard guys groove. I heard rhythm and blues. I'm telling you listening to Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf and that kind of thing, I heard it every Saturday. If I wasn't working, I was sitting listening to Howlin' Wolf, and them motherfuckers... In Evanston and they would be, so that was part of my thing. What I thought, I had to work. You know, so I never got on a program that I wasn't gonna work. I just wanted to play music. I didn't give a shit, you know, (about just playing) jazz!<sup>421</sup>

Cranshaw's star pupil, bassist Tom Barney, observed this philosophy of open-mindedness over many years spent with Cranshaw.<sup>422</sup> This philosophy helped Cranshaw to adapt to any musical setting, both in and out of jazz contexts, and made him an in-demand musician a wide variety of musical styles.

The next session that Cranshaw recorded for Blue Note displayed his versatility, strong supporting ability, and it even feature his solo abilities. On December 21, 1963, just six weeks after his first session with the label, Cranshaw participated in what would

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<sup>420</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 8 August 2016).

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

<sup>422</sup> Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" 34.

become the most successful recording session Blue Note ever conducted: Lee Morgan's *The Sidewinder*.<sup>423</sup> In the original liner notes to *The Sidewinder* Morgan praised Cranshaw's abilities, again, specifically noting his versatility:

Bob's one of the best all-around bass players on the scene today. He's got a great big sound, and no matter what kind of music you bring in, he can see what's happening and read it. And he can walk, and he can solo.<sup>424</sup>

Even before *The Sidewinder* and its successes, Cranshaw had become Morgan's bassist of choice: he recorded with Morgan on two sessions that were led or co-led by the trumpeter, *The Young Lions* and *Take Twelve*.<sup>425</sup> and *The Sidewinder* further solidified his mainstay status. Cranshaw would go on to record thirteen albums with Morgan, six of which were led by Morgan.<sup>426</sup> In the liner notes to *The Sidewinder* Leonard Feather echoed Morgan's sentiments about Cranshaw's solo abilities, specifically on the title track, and said, "Cranshaw bears out Lee's complementary observations in a fine solo that owes part of its success to the continued pulsing of Billy Higgins' percussion figures."<sup>427</sup>

The session for *The Sidewinder* featured Morgan, Cranshaw, Barry Harris, Joe Henderson, and Billy Higgins; all were musicians that Cranshaw had worked and recorded with previously.<sup>428</sup> There was much speculation and doubt about Morgan and his struggles with heroin addiction. Before the fall of 1963 he had disappeared from the New York jazz scene and returned to his hometown, taking a break of nearly a year from

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<sup>423</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>424</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Sidewinder* (1963), LP, Blue Note Records BLP4157.

<sup>425</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

<sup>427</sup> Feather, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Sidewinder*

<sup>428</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw"

recording.<sup>429</sup> With the exception of a live performance at Birdland in November of 1962, Morgan had not recorded since the *Take Twelve* session, (on which both Cranshaw and Harris had recorded) in January, 1962.<sup>430</sup> In the interim, Morgan had returned to Philadelphia in an attempt to recover from heroin addiction.<sup>431</sup> His rehab was only partially successful, and though he was able to return to prominence following his time in Philadelphia, drug use would plague him until his death in 1972.<sup>432</sup>

However, in the fall of 1963, Morgan was on the rebound from addiction and he returned to recording, although doubts regarding his abilities remained. His record producer, Jazzland's Morris Levy, had stopped calling him due to his reliability issues. Morgan had been under contract to Jazzland, but when Blue Note's Alfred Lion contacted Levy for a release, Levy replied, "Use him for a date? You can have him. I don't know what to do with this guy—I can't get him in the fucking studio."<sup>433</sup>

Cranshaw also recalled skepticism at the prospect of working with Morgan during this period, due to his personal battle with addiction:

... I knew that Lee had a problem, so I was always leery. I always watched myself as what things I would do with Lee cause again, my thing was doing a gig and being paid. I wasn't going for no other stuff; I couldn't afford that.<sup>434</sup>

Despite these doubts Morgan began recording for Blue Note in late-1963, and his potential was no longer in question. The session for *The Sidewinder* was Morgan's third

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<sup>429</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Lee Morgan." *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=755> Accessed September 27, 2019.

<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Tom Perchard, *Lee Morgan; His Life, Music and Culture* (Oakville, CT: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 137.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>434</sup> Primack, "Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and *The Sidewinder*"

for Blue Note in the fall and winter of 1963, as he had recorded on *Evolution* with Cranshaw, as well as Hank Mobley's on *No Room for Squares*. (Cranshaw did not play on *No Room for Squares*)<sup>435</sup>

Near the end of the session for *The Sidewinder*, one additional piece was needed to complete the album, but they had run out of material. Cranshaw recalled that Morgan went to the bathroom for an extended period of time.

The Sidewinder, it's weird, we go in, we (almost) finish the date, but we need one more tune. Lee goes into the bathroom at Rudy Van Gelder's, he's in there ten minutes, fifteen minutes, twenty minutes. We're wondering, what is he doing? What's happening? But of course, nobody is saying a word, we're just waiting for him to come and let's do whatever we're gonna do for that last tune, let's do it.<sup>436</sup>

Everyone was familiar with Morgan's drug use and thought that he had gone in to shoot up. They were justifiably worried and because Morgan's habit was so bad, his death was almost expected — even predicted. In the notes for the reissue of *The Sidewinder*, writer Bob Blumenthal stated that while Morgan was recovering in Philadelphia some people thought he was already dead, even before he recorded *The Sidewinder*.

The gloss that Leonard Feather's liner notes provide for Lee Morgan's career in the period immediately preceding *The Sidewinder* disguises what was the most dispiriting stretch of the trumpeter's life. In the throes of a drug habit and, after the spring of 1961, no longer a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, Morgan spent two years in a kind of career limbo... Morgan's trumpet playing remained impressive; but his dependency kept him from regular work... Morgan's plunge into obscurity was so emphatic that, while back home in Philadelphia, he reportedly heard a jazz radio program offer a Lee Morgan memorial tribute!<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>435</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Lee Morgan."

<sup>436</sup> Primack, "Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and *The Sidewinder*"

<sup>437</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Sidewinder: RVG Edition* (1999), CD Blue Note Records CDP7-84157-2.

These skeptics were nearly proved correct just four months after recording *The Sidewinder*, when Morgan nearly died while using heroin and was saved by Wayne Shorter.

Alone in his hotel room before going on stage for a gig in Philadelphia, the trumpeter injected a dose of heroin that knocked him unconscious. As he collapsed, his head struck an oil-heated radiator, remaining in contact with the hot iron while he lay unconscious. Checking on him a short time later, Wayne Shorter discovered his friend lying on the floor, head bleeding and the smell of burning flesh permeating the room and saved him. Photos from Shorter's session later that week (*Night Dreamer* recorded on 20 April 1964) show Morgan with his head heavily bandaged from the incident.<sup>438</sup>

Given Morgan's habit, everyone feared the worst when he disappeared into the bathroom at Van Gelder's studio during the session for *The Sidewinder*, but in fact he had been composing the album's title track. Cranshaw recalled: "He was in the washroom for about twenty minutes or more. When he came out, he passed this sheet of music around and it was 'Sidewinder.'"<sup>439</sup> They rehearsed in the studio they and settled on an arrangement. The final take of "The Sidewinder" was number twenty-five, which reflects how much time was needed in the studio to complete the song.<sup>440</sup> It was not uncommon for Morgan to use studio time to flesh out his compositions. and several of his other pieces required dozens of takes. For example, "Speedball" from *The Gigolo* took thirty-two takes, "Zambia" from *Delightfulee* took thirty-six takes and "Need I" also from *Delightfulee* took forty-three takes.<sup>441</sup> In the process of finalizing "The Sidewinder" Morgan asked Cranshaw to play an introduction:

He needed a pickup he said, "Bob" We played the tune down and he said, "Play a pickup into the tune." and, I guess I'm a bass player of few notes. If

<sup>438</sup> Jefferey S. McMillan, *Delightfulee: The Life and Music of Lee Morgan* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2008), 127.

<sup>439</sup> Primack, "Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and *The Sidewinder*"

<sup>440</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Lee Morgan."

<sup>441</sup> Ibid.

he needed a long something for the intro, I probably couldn't have come up with it so I just said, "Do da do dum." (Sings "The Sidewinder" bass intro) And that was it.<sup>442</sup>

The length of the session, combined with the length of the song, which is ten minutes twenty-one seconds, meant that by the time they had finished the song Cranshaw had forgotten what he had played for the introduction.

So, we started, and Lee said play a pickup. So, I played the thing, "Do da do dum" (sings "The Sidewinder" bass intro) and we started to play the tune. The tune was very long, thirteen minutes or fifteen minutes long. When we got ready to take the tune out, I would've had to play 'Do da do dum.' (Sings Sidewinder bass intro) for us to go back into the melody but I didn't write it down, so I didn't remember what I played at the beginning. And all I could do was when we got to that point was to start to laugh, 'cause I forgot it. I had no idea what to play and we stopped at that point. I mean I couldn't go any further, 'cause I didn't know what I played at the top! You know, and I should have written it down, that's the first thing I'm aware of cause it was very short, so it would have been easy for me to do it, but when you're young you think you can remember everything, you know. Now I would've written it down at the beginning, but at that time I thought that I would remember it. And because of all the solos and the length of the tune I just forgot everything.<sup>443</sup>

In order to save the take they decided to splice two takes together. The resulting splice is barely audible, but knowing it is there, it can be detected.

And we had to go back and play, Rudy played from the top and I went in and I punched in 'Do da do dum' (sings "The Sidewinder" bass intro) and we played the tune out. And I think people really don't know that. If you listen to the recording you'll hear when we get ready, you'll hear just a little kind of like a little pause where I guess at that time, they had to splice it, we spliced things. So, I hear the splice or maybe my guilt for ... (laughs) I hear it, or I feel it 'cause I know I didn't do it! But that was the beginning.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid.

The impact that *The Sidewinder* created was indeed substantial, but the initial response to the recording was not entirely positive. Harvey Pekar's 1964 review of the album actually criticized the rhythmic style of the music.

The tunes - all Morgan originals - are, in general, simple and catchy. Only on "Hocus-Pocus," though, is a straight-swinging beat employed throughout. However, this doesn't mean that anything revolutionary in rhythm and meter has been attempted; the rhythm section often plays the choppy figures found in rhythm and blues or Gospel music.<sup>445</sup>

Pekar also seemed to pick up on the rhythmic tendencies of Harris, whom Cranshaw had described as most comfortable in the bebop style. "This type of accompaniment doesn't bring out the best in the normally estimable Harris. Sometimes he riffs unimaginative and utilizes tired funky intervals and chords."<sup>446</sup> Cranshaw echoed a similar sentiment in an interview:

It was funny: when we played on Lee Morgan's *Sidewinder*, it was one of the situations that was really funny. I always think in my mind, "What would have happened on *Sidewinder* had it been somebody like McCoy?" It could have been a whole different thing.<sup>447</sup>

Cranshaw also remembered that Harris acknowledged his need to play out of his normal comfort zone.

I remember Barry Harris saying, at the date, Barry saying, "I've never been on a hit, so I'm gonna play as funky as I can." Well, he ain't a funk kind of player, in saying as far as his sound and his groove is not in that kind of thing. But it came off. He was able to pull it off.<sup>448</sup>

Morgan had used Cranshaw and Harris together on his album *Take Twelve* and Harris appeared with Morgan at Birdland in late 1962, just before Morgan went back to

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<sup>445</sup> Harvey Pekar, "Record Reviews: *The Sidewinder*" *Downbeat*, 22 October 1964, 29-30.

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>447</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*

Philadelphia.<sup>449</sup> Clearly, Morgan was comfortable with Harris in a variety of settings.

Cranshaw remembered that Harris was the first to recognize the potential of “The Sidewinder” and that he made a concerted effort to play funky.

Now I remember the discussion, as we’re playing, Barry Harris like I think of the combinations of people on the date. Because if he, Lee, really wanted a funky thing then somebody like Herbie Hancock, who was more into that type of groove would’ve probably been the choice. Although we were the people who were at the date. Barry said, I’ll never forget, Barry said when he started, he was gonna play as funky as he could play, ‘cause he was a bebop player. And they were not into the funky style of the Horace Silver kind of thing that maybe the tune called for. So, Barry said “Man, I’m gonna play as funky as I can on it.” You know, but he had a feeling that the tune, there was something there. To the tune, he was the first one to say it. And I said “Yeah, maybe this is really a groove, it’s really a nice thing.”<sup>450</sup>

Years later, Harris was still satisfied with his effort: “Man, I was walking by a store recently and they were playing ‘Sidewinder’ and it sounded so good... Compared to a lot of things you hear these days, it sounded like heaven.”<sup>451</sup> Cranshaw was also delighted to play again with Billy Higgins:

Billy Higgins played on the tune, he just played. He made it so easy for me to do what I was doing, and it was groovy enough and funky enough without us selling out to something that we really didn’t dig. So, it was nice, it was great, I appreciate being a part of, again, a great thing. Because that helped create a whole genre of funk things that are happening still today. That was wonderful.<sup>452</sup>

Cranshaw mentioned that *The Sidewinder* had a lasting impact, and it became extraordinarily influential in several ways, both musically and commercially. The most notable characteristic of *The Sidewinder* was its unprecedented commercial success, and

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<sup>449</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Lee Morgan.”

<sup>450</sup> Primack, “Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and *The Sidewinder*”

<sup>451</sup> Zan Stewart, “Barry Harris Serving Up a Heavy Dose of Be-Bop,” *The Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 1993. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1993-04-09-ca-20825-story.html> accessed 22 October 2019.

<sup>452</sup> Primack, “Bob Cranshaw Remembers Lee Morgan and *The Sidewinder*”



as a result, the popularization of the “boogaloo” feel. Blue Note began to advertise *The Sidewinder* in the August 27, 1964 issue of *Downbeat*.<sup>453</sup> Blue Note regularly ran ads in *Downbeat*, and albums which featured Cranshaw had already been printed in the August 13, 1964 issue,<sup>454</sup> and the June 18, 1964 issue.<sup>455</sup> Cranshaw had also played on the four and a half and five star reviewed albums *Little Johnny “C”* and *The Bridge*, respectively. Cranshaw was starting to be associated with the elite class of young jazz artists. In fact, *Downbeat* offered subscribers their choice of several five star reviewed albums, one of which was *The Bridge*.<sup>456</sup> <sup>457</sup> In fact *Downbeat* was also recommending another album featuring Cranshaw, *Our Man in Jazz*, as part of their “Jazz Basics” history of jazz on record series,<sup>458</sup> and The Paris Academy of Jazz named *Our Man in Jazz* its record of the year for 1963.<sup>459</sup> However, this success did not mean that Cranshaw was immune to a bad review (see Antonio Diaz’s album review from January 1964.)

It was not uncommon for jazz albums to be commercially successful in the mid 1960s. *The Sidewinder* was released in July of 1964<sup>460</sup> and first appeared on the *Billboard* Hot 200 list of best-selling albums on October 10, 1964, when it entered at number 135.<sup>461</sup> When *The Sidewinder* reached its peak of popularity, reaching number twenty-five on the *Billboard* Hot 200 for the week of January 23, 1965, Stan Getz, Al Hirt, Louis

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<sup>453</sup> Anonymous, “25 Years of Blue Note Releases” *Downbeat*, 27 August 1964, 27.

<sup>454</sup> Anonymous, “25 Years of Blue Note Releases” *Downbeat*, 13 August 1964, 23.

<sup>455</sup> Anonymous, “25 Years Blue Note: First Name in Jazz” *Downbeat*, 18 June 1964, 25.

<sup>456</sup> Anonymous, “Take Your Choice,” *Downbeat*, 16 January 1964, 25.

<sup>457</sup> Anonymous, “Take Your Choice,” *Downbeat*, 2 January 1964, 23.

<sup>458</sup> Don Demichael and Pete Welding, “Jazz Basics,” *Downbeat*, 30 July 1964, 25-26.

<sup>459</sup> Anonymous, “Ad Lib: Europe” *Downbeat*, 26 March 1964, 41.

<sup>460</sup> Jefferey S. McMillan, *Delightfulee: The Life and Music of Lee Morgan*, 131.

<sup>461</sup> Anonymous, “Billboard Top LPs” *Billboard*, 10 January 1964, <https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-200/1965-01-23> accessed 23 October 2019.

Armstrong and Jimmy Smith all had albums on the chart as well.<sup>462</sup> This level of success was uncommon for Blue Note, which at the time was still a relatively small, independent label. The response to *The Sidewinder* was so unexpected that Blue Note ran out of copies to sell almost immediately.<sup>463</sup>

As the story goes, neither Lee nor Alfred Lion of Blue Note plotted musically for a smash. In fact, the company issued only about 4,000 copies upon release. Needless to say, they ran out of stock in three or four days. And *The Sidewinder* became a runaway smash, making the pop 100 charts. It was heard on jukeboxes, AM stations, as a theme for television shows, and even on a Chrysler automobile ad on TV. Jazz had its first crossover hit. The result was a considerable amount of rethinking by Blue Note and a certain amount of pressure applied to them from their distributors to come up with more of the same.<sup>464</sup>

Michael Cuscuna later described the effect that *The Sidewinder*'s success had for Blue Note:

The biggest years for Blue Note were, I think, 1964, 1965 and 1966, when "The Sidewinder" exploded, and "Song for My Father" and all the albums that they put out attendant to those did well. Suddenly Blue Note was really a big deal. You saw more ads by them, you heard more spots on the radio by them, and Blue Note really meant something. And also, that led to the time that Alfred then sold the label. I think that the pressure of it had a lot to do with the sale of the label too. Because once you have success and you are an independent label of any kind of music, you go through a series of independent distributors that cover different geographic areas, and you ship them records, and you want them to sell them so you ship them more, and they won't pay you for last release until you have a new release that they want. It is really a game of chasing your own tail. So, the more successful he was, the more Alfred had to go out on a limb economically, and the more the pressure there was to match the success. That stress was part of his ill health at the time he sold out.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> Anonymous, "Billboard Top LPs" *Billboard*, 23 January 1965, <https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-200/1965-01-23> accessed 23 October 2019.

<sup>463</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Lee Morgan *Tom Cat* (1964), CD, Blue Note Records CDP7-84446-2.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>465</sup> Lon Armstrong, "Interview with Michael Cuscuna" *Doobop* Issue 5, 200. <http://www.organissimo.org/forum/index.php?/topic/83009-trying-to-help-out-mosaic-by-suggesting-sets/> accessed 23 October 2019.

As Blue Note historian, author of *Blue Note Records: The Biography* and co-author of the *Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD* Richard Cook described, the success was both a blessing and a curse:

It was the best, and the worst thing that was ever to happen to Morgan before the awful events of 19 February 1972, *The Sidewinder* was an instant jazz hit, one of those themes, like “So What,” that insinuate themselves into the subconscious and remain there forever. Unfortunately, it also established a more or less unbreakable pattern for future LPs, a bold, funky opener — often with a title intended to recall “Sidewinder” — followed by half-a-dozen forgettable blowing themes, or, if you were lucky, another swinger to kick off the second side.<sup>466</sup>

In fact, the success of *The Sidewinder* was so profound that decades later, when Blue Note was reemerging as a label, *The Sidewinder* was used to gauge public opinion of the jazz genre as a whole.

“We’d ask people if they liked jazz, and they said, ‘No, I hate jazz,’” says Blue Note president Don Was of the market research they did when he started at the label in 2010. “But we’d put on *The Sidewinder* and they’d say ‘Oh, I like that, what’s that?’”<sup>467</sup>

Despite the eventual success of *The Sidewinder*, at the time of the recording, in 1963 and 1964, Cranshaw was regularly recording, performing and rehearsing with some of the best artists in jazz. Just eight days after recording *The Sidewinder*, Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder Studios to record with Joe Henderson, Grant Green, Duke Pearson and Al Harewood for a session led by Bobby Hutcherson.<sup>468</sup> This is exactly the

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<sup>466</sup> Richard Cook and Brian Morton, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD* (London: Penguin Books, Fourth Edition, 1998), 1091.

<sup>467</sup> Natalie Weiner, “Blue Note’s High Notes: The Jazz Label Celebrates 80 Years” *Billboard*, 7 January 2019. <https://www.billboard.com/articles/news/8492513/blue-note-jazz-label-80th-anniversary> accessed 22 October 2019.

<sup>468</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

same group of musicians that played on Grant Green's Blue Note album *Idle Moments*, which had been quite successful.<sup>469</sup>

Interestingly, the selections include the first recording of Joe Henderson's composition "The Kicker," a piece that became quasi-jazz standard which Henderson recorded in groups with Horace Silver, Grant Green and his own bands.<sup>470</sup> The album begins with the song "If Ever I Would Leave You," which had just barely entered the jazz lexicon; it was first recorded in 1960, and was recorded by groups led by Sonny Rollins, of which Cranshaw was a member.<sup>471</sup> The Rollins recordings of "If Ever I Would Leave You," were just the fifth and sixth times the song had been recorded in a jazz setting and the recording on Hutcherson's *The Kicker* was the tenth.<sup>472</sup> Henderson had already recorded "If Ever I Would Leave You" on his first date with Blue Note, Kenny Dorham's *Una Mas*, but on *The Kicker* the treatment is altogether different.<sup>473</sup> It is worth noting that Cranshaw was the only common member in both the Rollins and Hutcherson groups that recorded the song, and he may have suggested the song, however, given that Henderson plays the first solo, it is possible that Henderson selected the piece and knew it from the Rollins recording.

The music on the session is excellent, but Blue Note did not release the album at the time of the recording. It would have remained unheard if not for the efforts of

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<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

<sup>470</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Joe Henderson," <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2632> (2019), accessed 24 October 2019.

<sup>471</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: If Ever I Would Leave You," <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=3296> (2019), accessed 24 October 2019.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid.

<sup>473</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Bobby Hutcherson, *The Kicker* (1999), CD, Blue Note Records 5-21437-2.

Michael Cuscuna who began issuing unreleased Blue Note sessions in the late 1990s. In the notes to the 1999 release, Cuscuna posed the obvious question: why did Blue Note keep this music from release?

It is hard to know whether Blue Note's Alfred Lion passed over this session because it was too loose around the edges or because it didn't seem a simpatico successor to *Idle Moments* or because it was too conventional for where Bobby was going at the time. I do know that when I got into the vaults in 1975 that there were so many wonderful sessions with Joe Chambers and Harold Land that this date fell by the wayside ('till now).<sup>474</sup>

Later, Cuscuna met Lion and asked him why several of the sessions were held in the Blue Note vault for so long:

We talked about that one morning. His reaction was, "Some of that stuff, I don't know why I didn't release that at the time." In fact, that is how I got to know him. I grew up with Lion's records, and I was in his vault, playing God... A lot of it he couldn't remember. I asked him about specifics, and he said he didn't know. He was surprised that there were instances where there were catalog numbers and album titles, and where the album covers even appeared on inner sleeves and were advertised, and the albums never came out. He said "No, I don't know why that would have been." Of course, in the day to day of things a lot of stuff gets lost. He wasn't looking at it ten paces back as history, he was just dealing with it every day as it came along.<sup>475</sup>

Blue Note was recording prolifically at the time; in 1963 the label led fifty-four sessions and in 1964 that number increased to fifty-five.<sup>476</sup> Cuscuna suggested that Blue Note was aware that it was not possible to release all of the music that was being recorded and the volume of recordings was simply a way to support the artists on their roster.

And then with guys who had economic problems for obvious reasons would go in there and ask for advances and do record dates just to get the money and he recorded a lot more Grant Green and Lee Morgan than he could ever have issued. The surprise is that Frank Wolff and Duke Pearson later on

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<sup>474</sup> Cuscuna, notes to Bobby Hutcherson, *The Kicker*

<sup>475</sup> Armstrong, "Interview with Michael Cuscuna"

<sup>476</sup> Michael Cuscuna and Michel Ruppli, *The Blue Note Label: A Discography, Revised and Expanded*. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 147-176.

when the pickings were slimmer never went in and used much of that. They did go in and dig some stuff out like the Grant Green with the cowboy tunes, and a couple of Art Blakey's and a couple of Jimmy Smith's, but for the most part they really didn't go back and use any of that at a time when I thought it would have been a good way to keep that pipeline going.<sup>477</sup>

Cuscuna also stated that in many cases, the reasons for holding a session from release were musical:

Any of those Blue Note albums that I caused to come out later on anyone could have sat down and said "Here are the musical reasons this didn't come out, the rhythm section didn't quite gel, the ensembles are loose," or this was too hip and the guy was having a hit at the time.<sup>478</sup>

Economic factors also played a large role in determining which albums were released.

The success that *The Sidewinder* generated dictated the general direction of many subsequent releases. *The Kicker* was just one of many casualties of success that had no obvious musical flaws and many albums may have been withheld purely for commercial reasons.

One of my favorite things that I found was [Lee Morgan's] *Tom Cat*. People don't realize that the other album that Morgan recorded around the same time as *Tom Cat* that fell into the cracks was *Search for the New Land*. That didn't come out until about five years after it was recorded for the same reason that Tomcat got shelved: *The Sidewinder* took off and they had to scramble into the studio and cut *The Rumproller*. And so be damned with these other two records; they weren't what the distributors are screaming for.<sup>479</sup>

Cuscuna offered what may be the best explanation of the subject of unreleased recordings: "...at a time when so many giants walked the earth and so much was happening that music of this caliber could get overlooked."<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>477</sup> Armstrong, "Interview with Michael Cuscuna."

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

<sup>480</sup> Cuscuna, notes to Bobby Hutcherson, *The Kicker*.

Cranshaw's next recording sessions were led by Sonny Rollins for an album titled *Now's the Time*.<sup>481</sup> Musically, it is an amalgam of bebop and jazz standards interpreted freely. In some ways it is similar to the treatment of the standards included on *Sonny Meets Hawk*, and *Now's the Time* is another exploration of the avant-garde. Cranshaw had mixed feelings about playing free jazz and as a result he would frequently take a leave of absence from playing with Rollins. Around this period trombonist Grachan Moncur, with whom Cranshaw had recorded *Evolution*, joined Rollins group. Moncur recalled how he became a member of Rollins' group:

I stopped by the Five Spot after the show one night, and Sonny asked me to sit in... Sonny can play everything and consequently the men working with him don't have to waste creative energy asserting themselves. This allows a much broader range of expression... I'm working with Sonny Rollins now, and it's a marvelous experience. Besides the fact that he's a genius — he's also flexible. Men constantly rotate in and out of the band; that sustains a continuously changing mood. Bandleaders often complain that new men can't play their music. If they were like Sonny and their music weren't so stiff, they could find an abundance of musicians... There is much talk about the avant-garde these days, and some people place my music in that category... Being avant-garde is not necessarily my intention. I simply try to make music the best way I know how. There is a wealth of musical richness in the air — if we will only pay attention.<sup>482</sup>

Cranshaw and Rollins remained close despite their music differences, and in an interview from 1995 Cranshaw addressed his relationship with Rollins and the avant-garde.

I'm still on and off, I would leave, I left and Sonny... And it was more free form. And although I enjoyed (it), I got a lot out of it, I didn't feel that I was really adequate for the role. I like to play changes. I'm not a free form, you know, I need guidelines, restrictions, or whatever. I needed a more structured situation. So, I stayed with Sonny for a while, and it got kind of loose to me and I didn't want to put the music down that we were doing, it just was not exciting to me. But I knew Sonny, being the genius that he is,

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<sup>481</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>482</sup> George Bright, "Getting into It - Grachan Moncur III", *Downbeat*, 28 January 1964, 14-15.

he was ready for that step. I wasn't ready for it emotionally. Musically I could have probably accepted it. But emotionally I didn't really feel good. And I didn't want players to feel like I was putting them on by just playing I mean you know just anything; I just didn't feel right about...<sup>483</sup>

Despite taking breaks from Rollins, Cranshaw remained his bassist of choice for the rest of Rollins' performing career. Rollins ceased public performance in 2012 due to health problems and Cranshaw was the bassist for all of his concerts that year.<sup>484</sup>

Recording for *Now's the Time* required four sessions, January 15, 17, and 20, and April 14, 1964.<sup>485</sup> In the interim between sessions with Rollins, Cranshaw remained busy. In fact, 1964 was easily his most productive year at that point. Cranshaw recorded on twenty sessions in 1963, but in 1964 he had recorded the same number of sessions by July 2.<sup>486</sup> He would go on to record fifty-six sessions in 1964 alone.<sup>487</sup>

In early 1964 Cranshaw began another musical relationship which he maintained for a long period of time, with husband and wife Stanley Turrentine and Shirley Scott.<sup>488</sup> Cranshaw recorded for the first time with either Turrentine or Scott on Jan 24 1964 for the Blue Note album *Hustlin'*.<sup>489</sup> The other members of the group were Kenny Burrell, with whom Cranshaw had recorded extensively and Otis "Candy" Finch, with whom Cranshaw had never before recorded.<sup>490</sup> The Blue Note sessions during this period were

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<sup>483</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>484</sup> Anonymous, "Jazz Great Sonny Rollins Still Not Finished at 85," *The Telegraph*, 6 April 2016, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/music/artists/jazz-great-sonny-rollins-still-not-finished-at-85/> accessed 28 October 2019.

<sup>485</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid.

<sup>488</sup> Mark Lommano, "Turrentine, Stanley (William)" *Grove Music Online*, 13 January 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2276721>, accessed 29 October 2019.

<sup>489</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.



mostly facilitated by Duke Pearson, who served multiple roles for Blue Note including performer, A&R representative, talent scout, producer, and arranger.<sup>491</sup> Cranshaw remembered Pearson's contributions for many of the albums he played on, especially the Turrentine sessions:

Duke Pearson, he put it together so that it was comfortable, he did that for most of the dates, with the Stanley Turrentine things and so forth. He made it easy for all of us to be able to come in and do what we do with a kind of structure to it.<sup>492</sup>

Cranshaw was recognized by writer Ira Gitler in the liner notes to *Hustlin'* for his contributions.

Bass and drums are in good hands. Bob Cranshaw is a powerful, straight-ahead player who has been heard to advantage with Sonny Rollins, Carmen McRae and on several recent Blue Note recordings.<sup>493</sup>

In the review of the album in *Downbeat* Harvey Siders rated the album three stars and stated that the music had "...(an) overall atmosphere of groovy relaxation, without anything to distinguish either track in terms of solos."<sup>494</sup> His main criticism of the album was that the bass is somewhat inaudible, and he doesn't mention Cranshaw until the final sentences of the review. He writes,

If Cranshaw's name is noticeably missing, it's because his sound is conspicuously absent. How rare indeed to have to criticize an engineer as dependable as Rudy Van Gelder.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> Barry Kernfield, "Pearson, Duke [Columbus Calvin, Jr.]" *Grove Music Online*, 20 January 2002, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.J349300>, accessed online 29 October 2019.

<sup>492</sup> Lannen, "Bob Cranshaw", 107.

<sup>493</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Hustlin'* (1965), LP, Blue Note Records BLP4162.

<sup>494</sup> Harvey Siders, "Record Reviews: Stanley Turrentine *Hustlin'*," *Downbeat*, 17 June 1965, 33.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*

Van Gelder had recorded Turrentine and Scott several times before *Hustlin'*, though in their first session Scott played bass on the organ and did not use a bassist.<sup>496</sup> Several subsequent sessions that Turrentine and Scott recorded for Blue Note had a relatively high frequency of rejected takes. For example, the January 18, 1963 session for Turrentine's *Never Let Me Go* had half of the takes rejected,<sup>497</sup> the session on October 14, 1963 was rejected entirely and the band was forced to return to the studio on October 21, 1963 to re-record all of the music from the previous session.<sup>498</sup> Cranshaw was not on any of these rejected sessions. For comparison, Van Gelder seemed to have no issues recording other organists during this period. Van Gelder recorded Freddie Roach on January 21, 1963, John Patton on January 24, 1963, and Jimmy Smith on January 31, February 1, 7, and 8, 1963. Collectively throughout these sessions, only one song was rejected.<sup>499</sup>

It seems clear that there were issues for Van Gelder and Blue Note when recording Turrentine and Scott, though when Cranshaw joined them for the *Hustlin'* session in January of 1964 no takes were rejected.<sup>500</sup> Whatever the problems had been before Cranshaw joined, they seemed to be resolved. With regard to Siders' criticism of Cranshaw's sonic absence from the band on *Hustlin'*, there is no problem hearing Cranshaw with recent reissues of the album.

In an interview for the Andrews Green book on Grant Green Cranshaw addressed what may have been the cause of Turrentine and Scott's difficulties in the studio. He

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<sup>496</sup> Cuscuna and Ruppli, *The Blue Note Label: A Discography, Revised and Expanded*, 124.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

<sup>498</sup> *Ibid*, 158.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid*, 148-149.

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid*, 162.

stated that when recording with Turrentine he made every effort to get each song recorded in as few takes as possible because Turrentine had a tendency to drink heavily during sessions. Cranshaw stated that the longer the sessions, the more intoxicated Turrentine became and it would be increasingly difficult to get good takes. Without calling Turrentine out by name Cranshaw said:

Sometimes the guys were messed up before we could even finish the dates. They would start to drink and by the time we finished the last tune, the guys would be on the floor.<sup>501</sup>

Turrentine was defensive about substance use and when asked about the drug habit of known heroin user Grant Green he replied:

Grant was a lot of fun and he was a good musician, regardless of his physical challenges. Charlie Parker had them, too. I can name them off. So did Elvis Presley. What about Elvis Presley? Why does mention have to made only for the jazz musicians?... I can't mention those things. We're not suppose' to be talking about one another.<sup>502</sup>

Cranshaw's brother Stanley's drug problem was one major reason he never tried drugs like so many of his artistic collaborators. Another reason that he avoided drugs was the influence of his mentor, Milt Hinton.

I wanted to be Milt Hinton. I wanted to be this. The next Milt Hinton was my dream. I just wanted to be like he was... When Milt Hinton walked in the door, you felt an energy, you know, it was something like a storm just hit the place. I mean it was so great. And I enjoyed that feeling. So, I said this is what I would like to be. This is the way I would like to carry myself. This is what I would like to become, you know. And it maybe kept me from doing some of the things, because during that period a lot of the musicians were into a lot of drugs...<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>501</sup> Andrews Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*. 105.

<sup>502</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>503</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

Thanks to Hinton's support and guidance Cranshaw was starting to ascend musically and professionally. His growth is well documented on the numerous records that show his musical development and the expanding group of musicians that he was working with.

A few weeks after recording *Hustlin'* Cranshaw was back with Junior Mance's trio (including Mickey Roker) backing up Joe Williams and Ben Webster.<sup>504</sup> In one night at Pio's Lodge in Providence, Rhode Island Cranshaw and company recorded 27 tracks that became two separate albums, one under Joe Williams leadership, *Havin' a Good Time* and one under Webster's leadership, *Live at Pio's*.<sup>505</sup> These albums document a working trio that had logged many performances and recordings. In addition to these two albums recorded on February 18, 1964 and those previously mentioned (*Joe Williams Accompanied by Oliver Nelson's Orchestra*, *Joe Williams Accompanied by Jimmy Jones Orchestra*, *Newport '63*, and several recordings without Williams)<sup>506</sup> Mance's group backed Williams in live performances across the country. *Downbeat* magazine documents this in the "Ad Lib" section of February 27, 1964.<sup>507</sup> A feature article on Williams from December of 1964 also makes mention of Mance's trio backing up Williams.

Williams took on the Junior Mance Trio as his accompaniment... The musicians were musically compatible; and the young men approached their profession as a business, accepting Williams as their employer.<sup>508</sup>

Cranshaw considered Williams influential and over his personal development and stated he felt in his time with Williams he grew both musically and professionally. For

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<sup>504</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>505</sup> Ibid.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>507</sup> Anonymous, "Strictly Ad Lib: New York," *Downbeat*, 27 February 1964, 43.

<sup>508</sup> Barbara Gardner, "Is Joe Williams Really Joe Williams?," *Downbeat*, 17 December 1964, 21.

Cranshaw to single out any one person is significant because he worked with so many high caliber artists during the early 1960's. One particular experience that made an impact was performing in front of legendary pianist Oscar Peterson.

...in the audience would be Oscar Peterson and his trio. And they'd enjoy it. I mean we would be cooking you know. I mean it was just an honor. I never felt that our performance was not worthy of whatever, because it was so consistent. It was just great. Every night I couldn't wait for Joe to hit the stand. Because some of the tunes were just gorgeous. And I mean I go back, I talked to Ray Brown's wife, and she remembers the times that we used to, they used to come and catch us in San Francisco, and it was just burning. I mean it was incredible you know. It felt so good I wanted to scream; it was just that great. But Joe was very patient with me as a young player, and talking to me, and trying to keep me from running all over the place. I was married, and to keep my family thing. I mean he was really; he was instrumental in me becoming a man I mean I feel.<sup>509</sup>

Williams' approach to the music business and the opportunities that his stardom afforded Cranshaw were crucial building blocks in his career.

Cranshaw was back in the studio with the duo of Shirley Scott and Stanley Turrentine for another album at the end of March.<sup>510</sup> For Cranshaw this was an abnormally long interval (February 18 to March 31) between recordings at that point in his career.<sup>511</sup> This recording was also the only album that he played on in March of 1964.<sup>512</sup> This is likely because he was travelling with Williams and Mance's trio<sup>513</sup> and was not in New York to do any recording. Around this time Cranshaw traveled to London with Williams and Mance's trio. Drummer Mickey Roker recalled this trip in an

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<sup>509</sup> Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>510</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Anonymous, "Strictly Ad Lib: New York," *Downbeat*, 27 February 1964, 43.

interview with Ethan Iverson: “In fact the first time I went to London, me and Cranshaw went together with Joe Williams...”<sup>514</sup>

Cranshaw played on 54 recording sessions in 1964 (an average of 4.5 a month) and March was the only month that he made just one record, though in February he made only two recordings.<sup>515</sup> The number of recordings by year and month provide a good perspective on how in demand Cranshaw became during 1964. Cranshaw’s total number of jazz recordings is 462 according to the Lord Discography.<sup>516</sup> That means that in 1964 he made roughly 11.5% of his total number of recordings in just one single year.<sup>517</sup>

The album Cranshaw recorded on March 31, 1964 with Scott and Turrentine was just the second time Cranshaw recorded with the couple.<sup>518</sup> Cranshaw was again called out in the liner notes for his supportive playing and his rapport with drummer Otis “Candy” Finch.<sup>519</sup> Cadena wrote:

Drummer Otis Finch, better known as “Candy,” by his associates, and bassist Bob Cranshaw provide ideal accompaniment for the strong work of Turrentine and Miss Scott. At a time when a lot of young drummers and bass players are forgetting about the basic role of accompaniment, it is refreshing to hear musicians like these two who work so well in a group. Listen to the way Finch and Cranshaw push behind the soloists on Sonny Rollins “Grand Street” and the relaxed feeling that the group gets on “Flamingo.”<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Mickey Roker”

<sup>515</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid.

<sup>518</sup> Ibid.

<sup>519</sup> Ozzie Cadena, notes to Shirley Scott and Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Flames* (1964), LP, Prestige Records PR7338.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid.

These sentiments were a premonition of the significant musical relationship that would grow between Cranshaw, Scott and Turrentine. Cranshaw would go on to make a total of 10 albums with Scott between 1964 and 1968<sup>521</sup> and nineteen albums with Turrentine during the same period.<sup>522</sup> The mid 1960's were the most fertile period of recording (jazz) in Cranshaw's career. Up to this point his career had been on a steady trajectory of increased demand and work. He was soon to experience a drastic increase in his workload and the number of people with whom he collaborated.

### Part VI: 1964

As 1964 progressed, Cranshaw increased his stature in the New York jazz scene. His connections with musicians of his past also helped him create new associations. One example of Cranshaw's connections creating new opportunities was with vocalist Betty Carter, whose album *Inside Betty Carter*, recorded in April of 1964, featured Cranshaw, Harold Mabern and Roy McCurdy.<sup>523</sup> Cranshaw had worked with the other members of the rhythm section extensively, but *Inside Betty Carter* was his first time working with Carter. Just before *Inside Betty Carter*, Carter had been on a tour of Japan with Sonny Rollins, pianist Paul Bley, bassist Henry Grimes and drummer Roy McCurdy in September of 1963.<sup>524</sup> Cranshaw had worked with this very group (minus Carter and Grimes, plus Coleman Hawkins) on the album *Sonny meets Hawk* in July of 1963.<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid.

<sup>523</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>524</sup> William R. Bauer *Open the Door: Betty Carter* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 91.

<sup>525</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

The arrangements for *Inside Betty Carter* were done by Carter herself<sup>526</sup> with additional individual musical contributions from Cranshaw, Mabern and McCurdy.<sup>527</sup>

Mabern recalled Carter's input during the rehearsal process.

I enjoyed it thoroughly, but it was very challenging. She played a little piano and she knew what she wanted. You couldn't jive around, musically speaking. She did a lot of those slow songs very slow. It was a challenge. I know we hooked up good, which was very important.<sup>528</sup>

Cranshaw's musical contributions are especially evident in the song "Look No Further" which features both an introduction and outro of solo bass that Cranshaw improvised.<sup>529</sup>

One of Carter's compositions from this session, "Open The Door" was first recorded on this album.<sup>530</sup> "Open The Door" became a staple of Carter's performances throughout her career, and she recorded it more than any other song.<sup>531</sup> (Carter's biography *Open The Door: Betty Carter* was also titled after this song.) Carter also stated that she felt *Inside Betty Carter* was one of her two favorite albums.<sup>532</sup>

Harold Mabern recalled thorough rehearsals with the band prior to recording the album. "We rehearsed for that! It was me, Cranshaw and Roy McCurdy. We rehearsed quite a bit, then we recorded the record."<sup>533</sup> Ironically, given the large contributions made by the sidemen on *Inside Betty Carter*, the names of the musicians were not listed in the

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<sup>526</sup> Bauer, *Open the Door: Betty Carter*, 98-99.

<sup>527</sup> Roy McCurdy, personal interview (Stanford, CA: 17 July 2018).

<sup>528</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)

<sup>529</sup> Betty Carter, *Inside Betty Carter* (1964), LP United Artists UAL3379.

<sup>530</sup> Tom Lord. "TJD-Online: Betty Carter." *The Jazz Discography Online* <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=44493> accessed 15 January 2020.

<sup>531</sup> Bauer, *Open The Door: Betty Carter*, 99.

<sup>532</sup> Bauer, *Open The Door: Betty Carter*, 98.

<sup>533</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)



notes to the original issue, and the identities of the sidemen was unknown for many years.<sup>534</sup> Mabern remembered the names of being left off the original issue as well.

When it first came out, they didn't put the names of the musicians on there. It was so well received she had to re-release it and put the names. I thought it turned out to be a very good record, myself. That's the best record she's made as far as I'm concerned. It's strange, I ended up doing most of the singing gigs at Birdland. After I worked with Betty, word kinda got around.<sup>535</sup>

The album was in high demand long after its original issue and Carter fought to have the album reissued a dozen years after its original release.<sup>536</sup> It was not until 1980, when the album was finally reissued<sup>537</sup> that the names of the other musicians were widely known.<sup>538</sup> Carter wrote:

It pleases me to be able to reissue my own album recorded in June, 1964... thank you (to the) many people in my audiences who requested it. Now I can reveal for the first time the names of the musicians accompanying me. Hal (sic) Mabern on Piano, Bob Cranshaw on bass, Roy McCurdy on drums.<sup>539</sup>

Carter stated in the notes to the 1980 reissue that the session was recorded in June, but she is contradicted by the Lord Discography, which states that the session actually occurred in April of 1964.<sup>540</sup> This album and its subsequent success may not have had much effect (at the time of release) on public opinion of Cranshaw since the names of the

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<sup>534</sup> Gary Giddins, notes to Betty Carter, *Inside Betty Carter* (1964), LP, United Artists UAL3379.

<sup>535</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)

<sup>536</sup> Bauer, *Open The Door: Betty Carter*, 98.

<sup>537</sup> Betty Carter, *Inside Betty Carter* (1964, reissued 1980), CD, Capitol Records CDP0777-7-89702-2-4.

<sup>538</sup> Betty Carter, notes to Betty Carter, *Inside Betty Carter* (1964, reissued 1980), CD, Capitol Records CDP0777-7-89702-2-4.

<sup>539</sup> Carter, notes to Betty Carter, *Inside Betty Carter* (1964, reissued 1980)

<sup>540</sup> Lord. "TJD-Online: Betty Carter."

artists were not publicly known for over a dozen years. It is, however, another example Cranshaw's profound ability to elevate the music and groups he worked with.

Following this session with Carter, Cranshaw was back in the studio with Rollins, later in April completing the sessions for Rollins' album *Now's The Time*.<sup>541</sup> The first session for Cranshaw in May of 1964 was a return to the studio with Shirley Scott for an album titled: *Great Scott!!*<sup>542543</sup> Cranshaw only played on the "B" side of *Great Scott* with Otis "Candy" Finch, on the "A" side is a large ensemble conducted by Oliver Nelson.<sup>544</sup> Scott played so frequently with Cranshaw in 1964 that of the six albums Scott recorded in 1964, Cranshaw is on five of them (at least in part.)<sup>545</sup>

Cranshaw returned to Englewood Cliffs New Jersey and Van Gelder Studios in May and June of 1964 to record what can be considered a pair of records under the leadership of Grant Green.<sup>546</sup> These albums feature the pianist McCoy Tyner and drummer Elvin Jones, both of whom were working in John Coltrane's classic quartet during the period that these albums were recorded.<sup>547</sup> Cranshaw had already played on two successful records with members of the group, Green's *Idle Moments* in 1963, (Cranshaw also played with Green on Bobby Hutcherson's *The Kicker*, in 1963 though that album would not be issued until the 1980's) and Tyner's *Live in Newport '63*.<sup>548</sup>

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<sup>541</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>542</sup> Ibid.

<sup>543</sup> It is necessary to make a distinction between *Great Scott!!* (with two exclamation points,) recorded in 1964, which Cranshaw played, and the separate recording *Great Scott!* (with one exclamation point,) recorded in 1958, which Cranshaw did not play on.

<sup>544</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>545</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Shirley Scott."

<sup>546</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>547</sup> Tom Lord. "TJD-Online: John Coltrane" *The Jazz Discography Online* <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2505> accessed 16 January 2020.

<sup>548</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Cranshaw had recorded with Jones earlier in 1964 on a Sonny Rollins led recording session for *Now's The Time*, but that session was never issued as part of *Now's The Time* or on any other record.<sup>549</sup>

Cranshaw's musical rapport with Tyner was well established on *Live in Newport '63*, but this recording is the first available example of his playing with Jones.<sup>550</sup> Their chemistry is clear and Cranshaw's approach was to play consistent time in order to allow Jones to express his unique style.

I'm gonna lock down. I'm gonna lock you (Jones) down, but I don't care where you put the beat. Elvin Jones's thing is exciting, so I don't want him to change, but I just get under him and I lay the time. For me, I assist drummers because I like to lay it down and give them a chance to do what they do.<sup>551</sup>

In the liner notes to the original 1990 release of *Matador* producer Michael Cuscuna wrote little about Cranshaw but he did comment: "Elvin and Cranshaw are there all the way."<sup>552</sup> Cranshaw and Jones would go on to play together extensively throughout 1964, recording a total of six times.<sup>553</sup> Surprisingly, these six sessions are the entirety of the recorded musical collaborations of Cranshaw and Jones, all recorded in 1964 between January and November.<sup>554</sup>

*Matador* was bold in two respects, first: its use of both Tyner and Jones in the same rhythm section, outside of John Coltrane's group, and second: the choice to include

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<sup>549</sup> Ibid.

<sup>550</sup> Ibid.

<sup>551</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>552</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Grant Green, *Matador* (rec. 1964 issued 1990), CD Blue Note Records 5168910.

<sup>553</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>554</sup> Ibid.

one of Coltrane's biggest hits "My Favorite Things." Producer Cuscuna addressed both of these points in the liner notes:

Grant Green deserves a medal for doing Trane's hit "My Favorite Things" in the same setting. Although the group approaches the song with the same style and 6/8 feel as Trane, they do not reduce it to its barest chordal essentials.<sup>555</sup>

With respect to the choice to use two members of Coltrane's rhythm section Cuscuna commented:

Alfred Lion of Blue Note rather daringly used Elvin Jones and McCoy Tyner together on a number of sessions. I say daring because the identity and empathy shared by these two giants could swallow the spotlight from any but the most secure leaders.<sup>556</sup>

Indeed, the Coltrane's rhythm section was well known by 1964, as a unit. Though the bass chair was somewhat fluid, (at various times occupied by Steve Davis, Reggie Workman and Jimmy Garrison) the piano and drum chairs, occupied by Tyner and Jones were much more consistent. Tyner and Jones began playing together with Coltrane in 1960 and at the time of *Matador*, the group had been recording and touring consistently since then.<sup>557</sup> Cranshaw was also well aware of the powerful group dynamic between Tyner and Jones from his time playing with Sonny Rollins.<sup>558</sup>

...in thinking about (Tyner and Jones) with Trane, his group, Elvin created excitement with Trane. McCoy was almost like the bass player. He kept the time, to me. He kept the chordal thing so that whatever the structure, wherever they went, it was cool, and it was exciting to hear Coltrane live. You would end up screaming because it felt so good. McCoy's thing to me – he laid the shit down. He gave them a chance to do what they do. He played solos, he did everything else, but his comping was like an orchestra.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> Cuscuna, notes to Grant Green, *Matador* (rec. 1964 issued 1990)

<sup>556</sup> Ibid.

<sup>557</sup> Lord. "TJD-Online: John Coltrane"

<sup>558</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>559</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

Cranshaw was a fan of Coltrane's classic quartet that featured both McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones.

Oh, the band was a bitch. Listening to the band was a bitch... So, you know you got a chance to hear a lot of it nightly. I'd hear Trane probably nightly. He and Sonny worked opposite each other; it was just a joy. There was no competitive thing, you just looked forward to hearing each band cause each band brought some other shit. When they hit the stand whoa! It was one of those things you always heard something different. His band was different than what Sonny was trying to do.<sup>560</sup>

Despite *Matador* sitting unreleased for years, it is considered some of Green's best work.

In the notes Cuscuna wrote:

Grant Green left a wealth of music in the Blue Note vaults, some of which will hopefully be issued. He was a guitarist of high intelligence with powerful drive... his good work is truly great. And this album belongs in that part of his legacy.<sup>561</sup>

In a later interview Cuscuna echoed this sentiment:

What was left behind was some unbelievably high-quality stuff... there were two albums with McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones. One was just a quartet session and the other had Joe Henderson on tenor and James Spaulding on alto. Those were really exceptional records by any standard by anybody, at any time. I was quite amazed that they didn't come out. (at the time they were recorded)<sup>562</sup>

Elvin Jones was also impressed by the music on *Matador* and said in an interview: "For me, I thought it was his (Green's) peak. He surpassed himself. He did everything absolutely flawlessly.... I don't think he had any peers."<sup>563</sup> Jones also voiced his opinion as to why Blue Note was able to record and hold so much music, he said:

It was relatively simple to make a recording. The economics were very low on the jazz artist side, so it was easy for the record companies to make a lot

<sup>560</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 15 July 2016).

<sup>561</sup> Cuscuna, notes to Grant Green, *Matador* (rec. 1964 issued 1990)

<sup>562</sup> Bechtel, *Grant Green: An Analysis of the Blue Note Guitarist's Musical Vocabulary*, 11-12.

<sup>563</sup> Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*, 89.

of recordings because there wasn't a big outlay as far as money from their point of view. So, they made a lot of recordings with a lot of jazz artists. But I don't think very many of the jazz artists received any of the benefits of the marketing process... on the economic side, it was sort of a life-and-death struggle all the time. It was very difficult for the musician.<sup>564</sup>

Critics also thought highly of *Matador* and they were particularly impressed by the fact that Cranshaw doesn't simply fit in with the sound of Coltrane's sidemen, but adds considerably to it. In *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD* Richard Cook wrote:

Cranshaw is a funkier bassist than Jimmy Garrison and he probably makes the biggest overall difference to the sound... A fine album that shouldn't just be valued for the contributions of the supporting cast. Green himself is still very much at his peak.<sup>565</sup>

After *Matador* session Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder's studio the very next day to record with Jaki Byard for an album titled *Out Front!*<sup>566</sup> The date is shared with bassist Ron Carter (on one track.)<sup>567</sup> It is considered one of Byard's finest sessions and rated as four stars by *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*.<sup>568</sup> It says that of the many recordings of Byard "*Out Front!*... remains our favorite..."<sup>569</sup> This recording reunited Cranshaw with Walter Perkins and in the reissue of *Out Front!* their teamwork is specifically mentioned: "Byard is assisted by the excellent rhythm team of Bob Cranshaw and Walter Perkins..."<sup>570</sup> Cranshaw fondly recalled both playing with Byard and the manner he worked in an interview with Ethan Iverson:

BC: Great. Great player. I learned a lot from him. Nice energy. Happy. Just a happy player. I felt great being in the presence of guys like that because from the very beginning, they just gave me an opportunity to do what I do

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<sup>564</sup> Ibid. 112.

<sup>565</sup> Richard Cook and Brian Morton, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*, 630-631.

<sup>566</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>567</sup> David A. Himmelstein, notes to Jaki Byard, *Out Front!*, (1964) Prestige Records PR7397.

<sup>568</sup> Richard Cook and Brian Morton, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*, 235.

<sup>569</sup> Ibid, 235.

<sup>570</sup> Don Schlitten, notes to Jaki Byard, *Out Front!*, (1964 reissued 1994) Original Jazz Classics OJC CD-1842-2.

without having to go through any bullshit, and it was nice. I wasn't put through any kind of test to work with him. I'd go and laugh and just had a good time. We always had a good time. I enjoyed being around him.

EI: Jaki sort of had something where he could play the very oldest kind of jazz music and the most modern, right?

BC: Yeah. He could do all of that in one tune. He would go into it. He was great. It's funny because not that many people know about his playing. I mean, a lot of the players who have passed, who guys have no idea even exist...

EI: He was a powerful force.

BC: Yeah, he was.<sup>571</sup>

Byard was not a frequent collaborator of Cranshaw's, only recording together three times (including *Out Front!*).<sup>572</sup> The two sessions for *Out Front!* were the third and fourth times that Cranshaw recorded in May of 1964 and they were the final dates Cranshaw recorded that month.<sup>573</sup> The frequency of Cranshaw's recording sessions were steadily going up, and though there were some months in previous years that he had recorded more frequently than he did in the early months of 1964, he was more consistently recording by mid-1964 than ever before.

At the beginning of June Cranshaw went back to work for Blue Note for a Stanley Turrentine album *In Memory Of*.<sup>574</sup> Turrentine was one of Blue Note's most frequently recorded artists and thanks to his repeat studio appearances he was able to employ a wide variety of musical settings, instrumentations and styles. Historian Bob Blumenthal observed this in his notes to the Mosaic collection of Turrentine's Blue Note quintet and sextet sessions.

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<sup>571</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>572</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>573</sup> Ibid.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

...he (Turrentine) was part of a notable tenor sax lineage that includes Illinois Jacquet, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt and Grover Washington Jr. each of these saxophonists was featured in diverse contexts on record... No one, however, shifted among studio settings with such frequency and consistency as Turrentine displayed in his Blue Note recordings of the '60's... the surrounding environment could be altered to create distinct textures, each with its own appeal... There were no hard -and-fast lines drawn in this regard...<sup>575</sup>

Turrentine himself was also well aware of this phenomenon:

I just keep an open mind and don't want to be put in a cubbyhole... My stepson and I were alphabetizing my albums recently... We noticed that one set said I was from the bop era, then another said I played fusion. But I leave the labeling up to you critics. I just try to feed off of the other guys on the bandstand. You'd be surprised where that can lead you collectively, as long as the music comes first.<sup>576</sup>

As a result of Turrentine's chameleonic nature, it is possible to hear Cranshaw in a wide variety of settings supporting him including quartet, quintet, sextet, septet, octet, big band and big band with twelve strings.<sup>577</sup>

The group on *In Memory Of* is a sextet that is enlarged to a septet on some of the tracks; the additional member is drummer Mickey Roker, who plays percussion, not drum set.<sup>578</sup> Roker was not identified in the original release and his presence on the album remained a mystery until the 2002 box set issue of the album.<sup>579</sup> The original issue with notes by the usually encyclopedic Michael Cuscuna simply said:

On the few occasions when Stanley used congas during this period, it was usually Ray Barretto, a man equally at home in jazz, Latin and studio contexts. A conga player joins the sextet here for "Fried Pies" and "In

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<sup>575</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*. (2002) CD, Mosaic Records MD5-212.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>578</sup> Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

<sup>579</sup> Ibid.



Memory Of' and it is most likely Barretto, although the identity of the conga player is not in the files for this session.<sup>580</sup>

*In Memory Of* features pianist Herbie Hancock instead of Turrentine's usual partner Shirley Scott.<sup>581</sup> Cranshaw had recorded with Hancock earlier in 1964 on a session for Sonny Rollins' *Now's The Time*, but that particular track has never been released,<sup>582</sup> the effect of which is that *In Memory Of* is the first recording that one can hear Hancock and Cranshaw together. They would go on to record together on 18 sessions between 1964 and 1969.<sup>583</sup>

The music on this album is overall very good, but was not released right away and sat in the Blue Note vault for fifteen years.<sup>584</sup> Many people have wondered what could have kept executives from issuing good material such as this album and writer Bob Blumenthal echoed these sentiments: "...a wonderful album that did not deserve its decade and a half in unissued purgatory."<sup>585</sup> The arrangements by Duke Pearson are a particular highlight of the album. Blumenthal again: "...good scoring... Whoever did the arrangements - Duke Pearson? - deserves a share of the credit for the session's substantial success."<sup>586</sup> It is also appropriate to recognize Cranshaw for his contribution to this recording. Blumenthal briefly recognizes his playing on "Sunday in New York," and wrote: "The self-effacing yet always propulsive Bob Cranshaw shines in the first 16 bars

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<sup>580</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *In Memory Of*. (1980) LP, Blue Note Records, LT-1037.

<sup>581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>582</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>583</sup> Ibid.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>585</sup> Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

<sup>586</sup> Ibid.

of the tenor solo where Hancock lays out...”<sup>587</sup> In the original 1980 issue of *In Memory Of* Turrentine weighed in on Cranshaw and his playing:

Bob Cranshaw can play with just about anyone without losing what makes him distinctive. It’s hard to put that special quality of Bob into words. I could talk about his sound, his beat, his conception, but maybe I can explain best what I mean by saying that if ten bassists we’re playing simultaneously, I’d have no trouble picking out Bob immediately.<sup>588</sup>

Cuscuna also noted that Cranshaw was, at the time of the original 1980 release, (and for that matter at the time of the 2002 reissue as well) still very much in demand and at the time of the recording he was the most recorded bassist for Blue Note during the 1960’s.

... he has been in constant demand in the studios for Jazz and commercial dates. Throughout the sixties he was the most frequent choice for the bass chair on Blue Note dates.<sup>589</sup>

Cranshaw’s next session was again at Van Gelder studios with Grant Green for an album titled *Solid*, recorded on June 12, 1964.<sup>590</sup> This album featured the same rhythm section, of Cranshaw, McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones, that was featured on *Matador*.<sup>591</sup> This session was recorded less than a month following *Matador*, and though there was one session that Green recorded between them, it has never been released.<sup>592</sup> This fact helps to highlight how busy Cranshaw was during the mid 1960’s, since Green was considered one of, if not the most frequently recorded artists on the label at the time. Bob Blumenthal described Green’s role as: “... (a) jazz giant... Green was the label’s (Blue

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<sup>587</sup> Ibid.

<sup>588</sup> Cuscuna, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *In Memory Of*.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid.

<sup>590</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>591</sup> Ibid.

<sup>592</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Grant Green” *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=16915> accessed 23 January 2020.

Note's) most ubiquitous performer at the time..."<sup>593</sup> It is interesting then to note that Cranshaw recorded three sessions between *Matador* and *Solid*<sup>594</sup> compared to Green's one session.<sup>595</sup>

Also featured on *Solid* were saxophonist Joe Henderson and James Spaulding on saxophone and flute as well as one rejected take that featured Duke Pearson playing trumpet.<sup>596</sup> Though Blue Note clearly thought highly enough of Green's output to record him often, and allowed him to record twice with the same rhythm section of Tyner, Cranshaw and Jones, this album was not released until 1979, 15 years after it was recorded, and after Green's death.<sup>597</sup> Elvin Jones, who played on both *Matador* and *Solid* (as well as other recordings with Green)<sup>598</sup><sup>599</sup> thought Green was one of the greatest guitarists of all time. He said:

I always thought Grant Green was one of the greatest guitarists that ever existed since Charlie Christian. I haven't seen anybody before or since that could compare to his artistry and conception of music.<sup>600</sup>

In the notes to this release Cuscuna again makes the assertion that the work Green produced in this period, including *Solid*, is some of his best work. He wrote:

His (Green's) early Blue Note Efforts preserve his best playing. And an album such as this reminds one of his creativity, intelligence and sense of challenge as a jazz musician. *Solid* and *Matador*, along with such classics

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<sup>593</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Grant Green. *Grant Green: 1961-1966 Retrospective*. (2002) Blue Note Records 7243 5 40851 2 3

<sup>594</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>595</sup> Lord, "TJD Online: Grant Green"

<sup>596</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>597</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Grant Green, *Solid*, (rec. 1964 issued 1979) Blue Note Records LT990.

<sup>598</sup> Jones played on seven recordings with Green, the exact same total as Cranshaw.

<sup>599</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Elvin Jones" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2351> accessed 27 January 2020.

<sup>600</sup> Andrews Green, *Grant Green: Rediscovering the Forgotten Genius of Jazz Guitar*. 93.

as *Idle Moments*, are the albums that truly represent Green. They are part of his legacy that will live forever.<sup>601</sup>

Bob Cranshaw and Green are the only members of all three of these recordings, which are according to Cuscuna, Green's "...best playing..."<sup>602</sup> Cranshaw's role in the success of these recordings, and by extension Green and his legacy, therefore, cannot be overstated.

Cranshaw's next recordings were a series of five sessions on June 23, 24, 26 July 2 and 9 with Sonny Rollins, Jim Hall, Herbie Hancock and Mickey Roker for an album titled *The Standard*.<sup>603</sup> Interestingly, Rollins had commenced recording this album with a single session on June 11 1964 that included a different rhythm section.<sup>604</sup> Evidently Rollins was not satisfied with the June 11 session and returned to using Cranshaw. In fact the time Rollins had recorded prior to *The Standard* sessions was the final April 14 with Cranshaw session for the album *Now's The Time*.<sup>605</sup> *The Standard* featured the dynamic team of Roker and Cranshaw in three separate settings: trio with just Rollins, and quartet with either Hall or Hancock.<sup>606</sup> Roker had recorded with Rollins once before *The Standard* on a live record without Cranshaw.<sup>607</sup> Roker stated that his decision to return to playing with Rollins was motivated by Cranshaw's presence. He said:

At that time, I could have gone with either Sonny Rollins or Trane. McCoy and I came up together. After Elvin was getting ready to leave, McCoy asked me if I would be interested in working with Trane. I said, "Yeah, of course." Then I decided to go with Sonny because Bob Cranshaw was there. But when we made this record, Bob Cranshaw wasn't there!<sup>608</sup>

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<sup>601</sup> Ibid.

<sup>602</sup> Ibid.

<sup>603</sup> Ibid.

<sup>604</sup> Lord, "TJD Online: Sonny Rollins"

<sup>605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>606</sup> George Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Standard*, (1964) LP, RCA Victor, LPM 3355.

<sup>607</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Mickey Roker" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2621> accessed 23 January 2020.

<sup>608</sup> Iverson, "Interview with Mickey Roker"

In addition to being roommates and “...best friend(s)...”<sup>609</sup> Cranshaw and Roker recorded sixty-four sessions together between 1962 and 2009.<sup>610 611</sup> This makes Roker the second most recorded person with Cranshaw, just slightly behind Sonny Rollins<sup>612</sup> who recorded with Cranshaw sixty-nine times between 1962 and 2012.<sup>613614</sup> The album *The Standard* is excellent, the chemistry between Roker and Cranshaw is clear and the addition of the dynamic solos and harmonic concepts of Herbie Hancock and Jim Hall take the music to a higher level. One strange aspect of the record are the fade-outs of several songs, the editing seems truly inappropriate. The notes of the release claim that this was in part due to Rollins’ desire for brevity, not a quality that was frequently on display in most of Rollins’ work. In fact, both Roy McCurdy and Cranshaw made a point of mentioning how long Rollins would play. Cranshaw recalled:

We used to play this (“I Want to be Happy”) fast when Sonny would play. We would do it for an hour. Not necessarily this song, but something like that when he came out. I remember being in California and we played at

least forty minutes like this. When I got through, I couldn’t bend my fingers!<sup>615</sup>

In regard to the editing on *The Standard* the notes say:

In a field given to long, spun-out improvisations, some of the performances are surprisingly short. This is in part because Sonny was seeking compactness and brevity of statement in much of the album, and in part

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<sup>609</sup> Ibid.

<sup>610</sup> Lord, “TJD Online: Mickey Roker”

<sup>611</sup> I had the privilege of attending one of the sessions featuring Roker and Cranshaw, Chuck Redd’s 2009 recording, *The Common Thread*.

<sup>612</sup> Rollins’ total number of recordings with Cranshaw are so high because in addition to the extremely long tenure of their association, Rollins recorded all of his live shows in his later years and issued them on a series of albums. Each album might contain a separate concert recording for each track, and each concert is considered a different session for the purposes of discographical record keeping.

<sup>613</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>614</sup> Roker is the most recorded drummer with Cranshaw with two dozen more recordings than the next closest drummer, Grady Tate.

<sup>615</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

because we felt, in editing the performances, that some of the brief bursts of fantastic improvisation (as in “Night and Day,” “Three Little Words,” and “I’ll Be Seeing You”) would be best set off if they were presented this way. The longest of these lasts only three choruses, and in each instance the last chorus is as wild and exciting an improvisation as Sonny has ever captured on record.<sup>616</sup>

Whatever the motivation, the effect of the editing is to interrupt what is an otherwise very special recording.

In between the sessions for *The Standard*, Cranshaw made a series of performances with jazz legend Thelonious Monk. One of which was at the 1963 Newport jazz festival and there is a bootleg of the performance which is now available on Wolfgang’s Vault which is about 30 minutes in length.<sup>617</sup><sup>618</sup> The band featured longtime Monk collaborator Charlie Rouse (who lived in Cranshaw’s apartment building on West End Avenue just north of 63rd street in Manhattan for many years) and drummer Ben Riley, who was on Rollins’ *The Bridge* with Cranshaw.<sup>619</sup> Cranshaw and Riley had not recorded together since 1962 and this was the first time Cranshaw had ever played with Monk or Rouse.<sup>620</sup> Riley had joined Monk in early 1964 and stayed in his groups long enough to record with him over a hundred times.<sup>621</sup> The performance was well received at the time and the group with Cranshaw in it showed promise. Newport historian Burt Goldblatt wrote:

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<sup>616</sup> Avakian, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Standard*.

<sup>617</sup> Bill Milkowski, “The Thelonious Monk Quartet: Live at the 1964 Newport Jazz Festival” <https://www.wolfgangs.com/music/thelonious-monk-quartet/audio/20020390-51182.html?tid=4865314> (2020), accessed 27 January 2020.

<sup>618</sup> This 1964 Newport Festival performance recording is not to be confused with the 1964 album *Miles & Monk at Newport* which includes a live recording of Monk at the 1963 Newport festival.

<sup>619</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>620</sup> Ibid.

<sup>621</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD Online: Ben Riley” *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=14> accessed 23 January 2020.

Pianist Thelonious Monk followed with a group that was in rare playing form despite the fact that Monk was breaking in a new bassist, Bob Cranshaw, and Ben Riley on drums. Tenorist Charlie Rouse soloed with wit and imagination, fitting in with Monk's thinking. The group shone on "Rhythm-a-ning." And Monk and Rouse had a compelling, buoyant quality that brought smiles all around the press pit, a sure sign that something of value was happening onstage.<sup>622</sup>

Cranshaw played with Monk for a few months in the Summer of 1964, with one of the groups' performance reviewed favorably in *The Village Voice*.

Thelonious Monk, saturnine and hatted... slipped on to the piano stool, struck a few chords, and we were transported immediately to his own special kingdom, with Charlie Rouse, Ben Riley and Bob Cranshaw on tenor sax, drums and bass.<sup>623</sup>

Joining Monk's group long term could have been a major, if not career defining association for Cranshaw. The other two sidemen in Monk's group at the time both stayed with him for decades over a hundred recordings between them,<sup>624</sup> and Monk is a central figure in both of their biographies from Oxford Music online.<sup>625626</sup> 1964 was also a landmark year in Monk's career with tours of Europe,<sup>627</sup> performances at the

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<sup>622</sup> Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 116.

<sup>623</sup> Leslie Gourse, *Straight, No Chaser: The Life and Genius of Thelonious Monk*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 219.

<sup>624</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Thelonious Monk" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=30341> accessed 23 January 2020.

<sup>625</sup> Russ Musto, "Ben Riley," *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2276369>. (2015) accessed 30 January 2020.

<sup>626</sup> Michael Baumgartner, "Charlie Rouse," *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2276419>. (2015) accessed 30 January 2020.

<sup>627</sup> Lord, "TJD Online: Thelonious Monk"

Newport<sup>628</sup> and Ravinia<sup>629</sup> festivals and the cover of Time Magazine.<sup>630</sup> Cranshaw was interested in Monk's music but found him difficult to play with. Cranshaw described his musical connection to Monk as similar to Barry Harris, with different concepts of time-feel and beat placement. He said:

I enjoy listening, but it was just harder for me because it's just not my groove. Playing with Monk – and I was only there for a short time – I enjoyed the experience, but it was different groove for me. At that point, I really started to understand, “Everything don't fit.” It don't always... Not one fits all.<sup>631</sup>

Cranshaw stayed in Monk's group for a period of a few months playing in various locations throughout the United States in the summer of 1964, which explains Cranshaw's low number of recordings in July and August of 1964 compared with months that he was consistently in New York. Cranshaw made just 3 total recordings in those two months combined.<sup>632</sup> Monk's biography mentions that Monk had numerous prospects in the coming months like the Monterey Jazz Festival and a World Tour including London, Italy, Germany, Holland, Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>633</sup> Cranshaw left before any of this though and instead resumed recording heavily in New York, recording eight sessions in September of 1964 alone.<sup>634</sup>

While Cranshaw was still working with Monk in the summer of 1964 the group returned to New York and while there, on August 11, Cranshaw recorded again with Lee

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<sup>628</sup> Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 116.

<sup>629</sup> Peter P. Jacobi, “Ravinia Gives Ozawa the Reins,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1964, Section X, 9. <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/07/12/archives/ravinia-gives-ozawa-the-reins.html>, accessed 30 January 2020.

<sup>630</sup> Krin Gabbard, “The Loneliest Monk,” *Time Magazine* <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,873856,00.html> accessed 30 January 2020.

<sup>631</sup> Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

<sup>632</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>633</sup> Gourse, *Straight, No Chaser: The Life and Genius of Thelonious Monk*, 219.

<sup>634</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”



Morgan for an album titled *Tom Cat*.<sup>635</sup> The ensemble was mostly Jazz Messenger alumni, most notably Art Blakey, the leader of the messengers.<sup>636</sup> Blakey made a very rare sideman appearance on this album and according to Michael Cuscuna, producer for the original release of *Tom Cat*: “Blakey, who had stopped doing sideman recordings dates in early 1962, was willing to do this one for Lee.”<sup>637</sup> In addition to Blakey and Morgan, Curtis Fuller is also on *Tom Cat* and all of them were active members of the Jazz Messengers at the time of this recording.<sup>638</sup> Jackie McLean was also a former Jazz Messenger but was not a member when *Tom Cat* was recorded.<sup>639</sup> “The music on *Tom Cat* is, according to Cuscuna: “...one of Lee’s finest sessions with a superb cast and some of the man’s best writing.”<sup>640</sup> Drummer Joe Farnsworth cites *Tom Cat* as one of the most influential albums for him and specifically notes Cranshaw’s contribution. “In college I got the record Tomcat. Art Blakey always had the biggest beat. (After hearing *Tom Cat*) I said “Goddam! Bob Cranshaw has the same big beat!”<sup>641</sup> Farnsworth later played with Cranshaw and shared his personal impression of Cranshaw’s beat.

I had this feeling twice in my life. Once with Horace Silver and once with Bob Cranshaw. If I can lock my time in with him, I knew I was playing jazz. Other guys, up or down. If I could put my quarter note right where his was, and be like that for the whole tune, or one chorus at a time, I was happy as a motherfucker man. That was the closest, I could say that I was really playing. When I hooked up with Bob, I knew I was really playing. I could tell exactly when things get exciting. I would speed up, I could feel it, and Bob would stay there like a rock. I’d have to calm myself down. Why do you think those records sound so great? Bob had the best pulse. The center of the beat. He had that epicenter, but the wave lasted the whole time. One

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<sup>635</sup> Ibid.

<sup>636</sup> Michael Cuscuna and Bob Blumenthal. notes to Lee Morgan *Tom Cat*.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid.

<sup>641</sup> Joe Farnsworth, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 23 March 2020)

quarter note would last into the second one, yet, it wasn't a ringing tone. The beat was so strong it would ring. It was so strong. It made you play, "I've got to widen my beat more, because this isn't working!" If you're playing 1,2,3,4, I might be on two and a half by the time he's done with one. I'd never had a guy make me play better. You have to play better. It's constantly right there, boom!<sup>642</sup>

It is important to note that Cranshaw's record history with Lee Morgan both preceded and followed *The Sidewinder*. *Tom Cat* is squarely in the middle of their collaborations, number five of thirteen recordings, that Cranshaw recorded with Morgan between 1960 and 1967.<sup>643</sup> Cranshaw's contribution to *Tom Cat* was praised by Bob Blumenthal in the notes to the reissue in 2005, he wrote:

Blakey and Morgan were already locked into the same swinging wavelength, while Tyner was more than familiar with Morgan's approach from their teenage years as prodigies in Philadelphia. Everyone seems to have fit together immediately and effectively, with Cranshaw's big, steady beat no doubt also deserving some of the credit for the impeccable comfort level throughout.<sup>644</sup>

Cuscuna also praised the overall success of the music on the album, he wrote:

From his earliest to his last days, the trumpeter preferred to record with sextets of varying instrumentation rather than the standard quintet setting... in several cases, such as *Tom Cat*, *Search for the New Land*, *Cornbread* and *The Procrastinator*, it brought out the best in his compositional talents. The assembled cast for this album is not only spectacular, but they are all people with whom Lee had played and with whom he shared a history and empathy.<sup>645</sup>

This album was another which was not issued when it was recorded and sat unreleased until 1981.<sup>646</sup> This album was another example of a recording with no musical flaws that was held back for reasons that remain a mystery. Bob Blumenthal explained that the Blue

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<sup>642</sup> Ibid.

<sup>643</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>644</sup> Michael Cuscuna and Bob Blumenthal. notes to Lee Morgan *Tom Cat*.

<sup>645</sup> Ibid.

<sup>646</sup> Ibid.

Note producers had a habit of recording more music than they intended to release but could not rationalize any reason for keeping *Tom Cat* from the public. He wrote:

Recording more sessions than could practically be released at the time was part of Alfred Lion's overall approach at Blue Note. Still, it is rather shocking that a collection as strong as *Tom Cat* took 16 years to surface, especially when it contained something as obviously funky and listener friendly as the title track.<sup>647</sup>

Cuscuna also alludes to the success that *The Sidewinder* had begun to achieve as a possible explanation for keeping *Tom Cat* from immediate release. He continued:

The lack of a cut with both soul and a danceable groove of "The Sidewinder" is the only imaginable explanation for why such winning music was shelved. Its belated appearance provided one more bit of evidence that the resurgent Lee Morgan of the mid-sixties was about much more than simply making hits.<sup>648</sup>

One consequence of so many of the albums that Cranshaw played on being held back from immediate release was that he never heard many of the albums that he played on. On several occasions during interviews with Cranshaw an interviewer would play a song for him he recorded that had not been released right away and he wouldn't even recognize it. In most cases, it had been many years since the recording sessions and Cranshaw only played music on the sessions once, at the time of the recording. Cranshaw rarely listened to his own recordings, even those that had been released right away and records like *Solid*, *Tom Cat* and *Matador*, remained basically unknown to Cranshaw for decades, despite achieving widespread acclaim and recognition from the general public.

After leaving Monk in August of 1964, Cranshaw's September of the same year was his busiest recording month to date with 8 sessions.<sup>649</sup> The first of the sessions in

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<sup>647</sup> Ibid.

<sup>648</sup> Ibid.

<sup>649</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

September was Stanley Turrentine's *Mr. Natural*, recorded on September 4th, and featuring Lee Morgan, McCoy Tyner, Elvin Jones and Ray Baretto.<sup>650</sup> It may seem an odd pairing to feature Turrentine in a group with two thirds of Coltrane's rhythm section but, as mentioned previously, Turrentine was an artist with "copious versatility..."<sup>651</sup> In the original release of *Mr. Natural*, Turrentine himself addressed this quality. He said:

I play a little of this and a little of that, and some of this and some of that. But hey, I'm playing something that's very tasteful too. I can listen to each record I've made over the past 20 years and not feel ashamed... I might put my music in different settings, but I can't change me.<sup>652</sup>

One of the more intriguing pieces of repertoire on the recording, and a good opportunity to hear Turrentine in a novel setting, is the piece "Wahoo/Stanley's Blues." This piece was written by Duke Pearson, and remained untitled at the time of the Turrentine recording, but ultimately became the title track to a Pearson album<sup>653</sup> in November of 1964.<sup>654</sup> It is a minor blues in 5/4 time and is a rare opportunity to hear a piece in an odd time signature on a Blue Note recording. Though the tempo increases quite substantially from the beginning of the take to the end, the performances are incredible.

One surprising fact is that this album is the only recording that features both Turrentine and Morgan.<sup>655</sup> The chemistry between the two of them is extraordinary for

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<sup>650</sup> Ibid.

<sup>651</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

<sup>652</sup> Michael Rozek, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Mr. Natural*. (1980), Blue Note Records, LT 1075.

<sup>653</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

<sup>654</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>655</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

having never previously recorded together. Cranshaw had previously recorded with all of the members of the ensemble (including Ray Baretto) and would record with them all again subsequent to this recording (except Baretto.)<sup>656</sup> *Mr. Natural* was not released until 1980, but it is a great example of all of the musicians in their prime. This is the third of the four recorded examples of Cranshaw with McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones.<sup>657</sup> This album is probably the least known of the four because, unlike like *Solid*, *Matador* and *Inner Urge* it was not issued on CD until the 2002 Mosaic boxed set of *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studios Sessions*, which was limited to just 5,000 copies.<sup>658</sup> It is also interesting to note that outside of playing in Coltrane's classic quartet, Tyner and Jones recorded together only 16 times and Cranshaw appears on four of those recordings, more than any other bass player.<sup>659</sup>

Cranshaw's next recording, still in September of 1964 on September 15, was under the direction of Quincy Jones for the album *The Golden Boy*.<sup>660</sup> This album was the first time that Cranshaw worked with Jones, as well as the first time that Cranshaw recorded with drummer Grady Tate.<sup>661</sup> Jones had become a vice-president of Mercury Records in addition to his role as an A&R man.<sup>662</sup> As a result he had the power to hire musicians for albums on the label and Cranshaw recorded dozens of albums for Mercury Records.<sup>663</sup> The album also features a second ensemble - with Milt Hinton on Bass.<sup>664</sup>

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<sup>656</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>657</sup> Ibid.

<sup>658</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Blue Note Stanley Turrentine Quintet/Sextet Studio Sessions*.

<sup>659</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD Online: Elvin Jones"

<sup>660</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>661</sup> Ibid.

<sup>662</sup> Anonymous, "Strictly Ad Lib: Potpourri" *Downbeat*, 28 January 1965, 12.

<sup>663</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>664</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw may not have been aware of the personnel on the other recording date for the album, but this was the first time that he had appeared on a recording with his hero, Milt Hinton. In Cranshaw's words: "I wanted to be Milt Hinton. I wanted to be this. The next Milt Hinton was my dream. I just wanted to be like he was."<sup>665</sup>

*The Golden Boy* includes an arrangement of "The Sidewinder," just the second recording of Morgan's tune (though over a hundred other versions would be recorded later.)<sup>666</sup> Quincy Jones may have chosen Cranshaw for *The Golden Boy* session as a result of his performance on *The Sidewinder*, and the success the album enjoyed throughout 1964. *The Golden Boy* was also successful in its own right and was recognized with three Grammy nominations in 1964, in the categories of Best Instrumental Arrangement, Best Instrumental Performance, Non-Jazz and Best Original Jazz Composition.<sup>667</sup> The song "The Witching Hour" (which was Grammy nominated for Best Original Jazz Composition)<sup>668</sup> features an excellent bassline from Cranshaw.

Another of Cranshaw's associations with Jones was working on the soundtrack to the 1964 film, *The Pawnbroker*.<sup>669</sup> The music on the soundtrack included jazz but was not exclusively jazz, as Jones described in the liner notes:

I wrote about 50 minutes of music altogether, some of the material was adapted or extended for the album. About 15 minutes of the music could be classified as jazz, the rest is straight dramatic composition, but of course some of it overlaps.<sup>670</sup>

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<sup>665</sup> Michael Woods, "Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw"

<sup>666</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: The Sidewinder" *The Jazz Discography Online* <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=57> accessed 3 February 2020.

<sup>667</sup> Quincy Jones, *The Autobiography of Quincy Jones* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 375-376.

<sup>668</sup> Ibid.

<sup>669</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>670</sup> Quincy Jones, notes to Quincy Jones, *The Pawnbroker*, (1964) Mercury Records, MG 21011.

Cranshaw was not the only bassist on *The Pawnbroker*, sharing the bass chair with Art Davis and Carol Kaye, so it is not clear which selections Cranshaw played on.<sup>671</sup> Jones described the ensemble on *The Pawnbroker* as including: “...the best players I knew... everyone I could find.”<sup>672</sup> The film was directed by renowned director Sidney Lumet, who had directed the successful film *12 Angry Men*, and would go on to helm *Serpico*, *Network* and *The Wiz*.<sup>673</sup>

Cranshaw spent September 22, 23 and 24 of 1964 recording with saxophonist Eddie Harris for the album *Cool Sax From Hollywood to Broadway*.<sup>674</sup> This was the first time Cranshaw had recorded with Harris and *Cool Sax From Hollywood to Broadway* was the first of two albums they made together in September of 1964.<sup>675</sup> According to the album liner notes this was not the first time that Cranshaw had played with Harris, they say: “Eddie Harris is assisted by three friends who performed with him in Chicago when he was first starting out.”<sup>676</sup> In fact Cranshaw and Harris had quite a bit in common, both were born in Chicago in the early 1930’s, both served in the army in the early 1950’s, both recorded for Veejay Records in Chicago in the early 1960’s and both attended Roosevelt College in Chicago.<sup>677</sup> Harris was a successful jazz artist, having sold more than a million copies of his recording of “Exodus,”<sup>678</sup> (the theme music to the 1960 film

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<sup>671</sup> Meeker, “Bob Cranshaw” *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>672</sup> Quincy Jones, *The Autobiography of Quincy Jones*, 178.

<sup>673</sup> Anonymous, “Sidney Lumet,” <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001486/> accessed 24 February 2020.

<sup>674</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>675</sup> Ibid.

<sup>676</sup> Joe Goldberg, notes to Eddie Harris, *Cool Sax from Hollywood to Broadway*. (1964), Columbia Records CS 9095.

<sup>677</sup> E. Ron Horton "Eddie Harris" *Grove Music Online*. 2012; Accessed 4 February. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2228407>.

<sup>678</sup> Ibid.

of the same title)<sup>679</sup> and as a result the material on *Cool Sax From Hollywood to Broadway* includes many songs from film and television.<sup>680</sup>

Amazingly, on the same day as the second session for *Cool Sax From Hollywood to Broadway*, September 23, Cranshaw recorded a second album with Shirley Scott titled, *Everybody Loves a Lover*.<sup>681</sup> In addition to Cranshaw and Scott, the ensemble's core includes Stanley Turrentine and Otis "Candy" Finch, the same group that had recorded together several times already.<sup>682</sup> This record also has a larger ensemble for a portion of the record that includes Howard Collins and Barry Galbraith on guitar and Willie Rodriguez on percussion.<sup>683</sup> This album has never been issued on CD and the LP is long out of print, though a few tracks are available on other recordings.<sup>684685</sup>

Later in September, on an unspecified date, Cranshaw and the rest of the ensemble from *Cool Sax From Hollywood to Broadway* recorded the first session for a second Eddie Harris album titled, *Here Comes The Judge*.<sup>686</sup> It is very similar to the first album by the ensemble, with several more songs taken from popular films of the period.<sup>687</sup> On both albums there are several Eddie Harris original compositions. Harris was gaining popularity as a composer and in the notes to *Cool Sax from Hollywood to Broadway*, Joe Goldberg noted this, writing:

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<sup>679</sup> Joe Goldberg, notes to Eddie Harris, *Cool Sax from Hollywood to Broadway*.

<sup>680</sup> Ibid.

<sup>681</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>682</sup> Ibid.

<sup>683</sup> Ibid.

<sup>684</sup> Ibid.

<sup>685</sup> Three tracks are on the CD reissue of Stanley Turrentine's *Let It Go* and one is on an Impulse Records compilation titled *The Definitive Jazz Scene: Volume 3*.

<sup>686</sup> Ibid.

<sup>687</sup> Gil McKean, notes to Eddie Harris, *Here Comes the Judge*. (1964) Columbia Records, CS 9681.



“Cool Sax, Warm Heart” has since been recorded by several jazzmen, and, with the evidence on this record, it looks as though Harris is on his way to achieving stature as a composer that will match the one he now has as an instrumentalist.<sup>688</sup>

Goldberg was correct that Harris would find success as a composer as his later compositions “Freedom Jazz Dance” and “Cold Duck Time” became hits. The *Here Comes the Judge* was concluded at a second session on December 18 of the same year with the same ensemble members.

On October 6 Cranshaw recorded the first of two sessions he played on for the Donald Byrd album *Up!*<sup>689</sup> (a third session for the album had Ron Carter on bass.)<sup>690</sup> In addition to the ensemble of Herbie Hancock, Jimmy Heath, Kenny Burrell, Cranshaw, Byrd and Grady Tate, there is a large vocal group called The Donald Byrd Singers with arrangements and conducting by Claus Ogerman. The popularity of *The Sidewinder* was beginning to be felt throughout the jazz world and it became common for albums to try to replicate its success with a boogaloo of some kind, and *Up!* featured Hancock’s hits “Cantaloupe Island” and “Blind Man, Blind Man.”<sup>691</sup> Other attempts at popular appeal are evident in the choice of “House of The Rising Sun” (which had become a hit for The Animals earlier in 1964,) “See See Rider,” and “Boom Boom,” the John Lee Hooker song. The album mentions the nod to popular music in the notes to the release, stating:

At the core of the production of this album is the belief that the American public is a lot hipper and a lot more flexible than many critics, musicians and record producers are willing to admit. It is a result of the realization that people will accept and enjoy any kind of music if it has a fresh and vital sound. In *Up* Donald Byrd proves that there is a very tight relationship and similarity between some American popular hits and modern jazz - the kind

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<sup>688</sup> Joe Goldberg, notes to Eddie Harris, *Cool Sax from Hollywood to Broadway*.

<sup>689</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>690</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: Ron Carter” *The Jazz Discography Online* <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=9> accessed 4 February 2020.

<sup>691</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

of relationship the narrow-minded hippies can't hear because they never listen to contemporary American popular music of any kind.<sup>692</sup>

The success of the music on *Up!* is debatable, but the jazz world was increasingly willing to attempt ambitious projects like this one in an attempt to generate wide appeal.

The next session for Cranshaw was another example of an ambitious project, a genre crossing recording with Nigerian percussionist Solomon Ilori, recorded on October 30, 1964. The session brought Cranshaw back together with Elvin Jones and included Hubert Laws (playing flute and tenor saxophone,) Donald Byrd, Coleridge Perkison, a large drum ensemble and a large vocal ensemble.<sup>693</sup> The session, like many others of the period, was not released right away, but it is likely because there was not enough good material from the session to fill an album. Three of the tracks from the session were eventually added to a CD 2006 reissue of a previous Solomon Ilori album, titled *African High Life*.<sup>694</sup> The music was well received when it was finally made available, with reviewer Chris May favoring the bonus tracks over the material on the original release.

He wrote:

The Nigerian-born Ilori arrived in the US in the late '50s and recorded the first six tracks on this album—the original *African High Life* release—in 1963. They're pleasant, if unspectacular, palm-wine highlife outings from the West African tradition... the album's final three tracks, recorded eighteen months after the rest of the set... anticipate—with great brio and deep grooves—the astral jazz of the late '60s and early '70s, and the world jazz which has in turn followed... traditional West African music wasn't engineer Rudy Van Gelder's main area of expertise, and recording technology in the early 1960s wasn't what it is today. By the time the final three tracks here were recorded, Van Gelder had it down more sympathetically.<sup>695</sup>

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<sup>692</sup> Jack Maher, notes to Donald Byrd, *Up!* (1964) Verve Records, V 8609.

<sup>693</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>694</sup> Ibid.

<sup>695</sup> Chris May, "Solomon Ilori And His Afro-Drum Ensemble: African High Life," *All About Jazz*, <https://www.allaboutjazz.com/african-high-life-solomon-ilori-blue-note-records-review-by-chris-may.php> 2006. Accessed 4 February 2020.

Cranshaw's next session was under the direction of Duke Pearson, who at the time was busily working in a myriad of roles for Blue Note. He was so busy in fact, that this was the first time Pearson had recorded as a leader since 1962's *Hush!* (which Cranshaw played on.)<sup>696</sup> To date, the tracks recorded on this session have never been issued, but the all of songs were subsequently rerecorded on a second session and are available on the album *Wahoo!*.<sup>697</sup> The ensemble consisted of Donald Byrd, James Spaulding, Joe Henderson, Duke Pearson, Bob Cranshaw and Otis "Candy" Finch.<sup>698</sup> The only difference between the ensemble on this session is the replacement of Finch with Mickey Roker.<sup>699</sup>

Next, Cranshaw was in the studio with Wes Montgomery for two sessions on November 11 and 16 recording for an album titled: *Movin' Wes*.<sup>700</sup> This was an album of many firsts: Cranshaw's first time recording with Wes Montgomery,<sup>701</sup> Montgomery's first album for Verve Records and Montgomery's first album with a large ensemble and him as the only soloist.<sup>702</sup> It is another attempt at commerciality with both the choice of material and the setting. The repertoire is described in the notes by writer Gene Lees, he wrote:

The diversity of material is also much greater than that usually associated with past recordings. He plays tunes that cover an enormous area ranging

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<sup>696</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Duke Pearson" *The Jazz Discography Online*, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=41195>, accessed 4 February 2020.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid.

<sup>700</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>701</sup> Ibid.

<sup>702</sup> Gene Lees, notes to Wes Montgomery, *Movin' Wes*. (1964), Verve Records, V-8610.

from the recent show tunes “People” (from the Broadway musical *Funny Girl*) and “Matchmaker” (from the Broadway show *Fiddler on the Roof*)  
 ...<sup>703</sup>

Montgomery was used to playing in an organ trio setting, even during the period he recorded *Movin' Wes*, he continued to tour with Melvin Rhyne and George Brown.<sup>704</sup> But, this album on Verve marked a shift in the settings that he recorded for the rest of his life.<sup>705</sup>

On November 21, 1964 Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder Studios to finish the aborted Duke Pearson project from November 6.<sup>706</sup> This time Mickey Roker was on drums instead of Otis Finch. Pearson thought so highly of Cranshaw that he hired Roker on Cranshaw's recommendation. He said in the notes to *Wahoo!*:

As for Mickey Roker, I was asleep on him for a long time, even though we were friends; but Bob Cranshaw suggested that I use him, and as a result of his work on this album, I will use him again.<sup>707</sup>

The other members of the ensemble were Donald Byrd, James Spaulding and Joe Henderson. This was Pearson's first recording as a leader since *Hush!* From 1962.<sup>708</sup> In the time between *Hush!* and *Wahoo!*, Cranshaw had become Pearson's absolute first call and had appeared on every record Pearson was on between July of 1963 and March of 1966, a streak of 14 sessions.<sup>709</sup> Roker too would become Pearson's first choice for the

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<sup>703</sup> Ibid.

<sup>704</sup> Ira Gitler, “Organ-ic Problems and Satisfactions,” *Downbeat*, 16 July 1964, 19-20.

<sup>705</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: Wes Montgomery” *The Jazz Discography Online*, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2507>, accessed 6 February 2020.

<sup>706</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>707</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Duke Pearson, *Wahoo!*, (1964), Blue Note Records, BLP4191.

<sup>708</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Duke Pearson.”

<sup>709</sup> Ibid.

drum chair, ultimately recording over two dozen sessions with Pearson.<sup>710</sup> The chemistry in the rhythm section was evident to Feather too, who wrote in the notes to *Wahoo!*:

The rhythm section, of course, swings (and speaks) for itself. Both Bob Cranshaw and Mickey Roker have been working for quite some time as Mary Lou Williams' accompanists at the Hickory House. They seem to belong together and to evidence as close a rapport as Duke and Donald.<sup>711</sup>  
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Cranshaw's next recording foreshadowed his eventual prominence as a studio musician in and out of jazz contexts. The session, titled *Kaleidoscope*, recorded on November 23, 24 and 25 1964, was led by Dave Grusin. Grusin was a pianist who had left New York in 1962 for studio work.<sup>713</sup> In the notes to *Kaleidoscope*, Willis Conover wrote:

Grusin... has been in California three successful years, and most of his waking hours have been spent writing or rehearsing for The Andy Williams Show, one of the few sunny-host television shows with a bonus of big-band swinging. Dave writes about half the arrangements every week and conducts all of them.<sup>714</sup>

Grusin had played with Benny Goodman and Milt Hinton in New York in the early 1960's but went to Los Angeles to pursue a career playing in studio orchestras and writing for film and television.<sup>715</sup> <sup>716</sup> The circumstances surrounding this album were a juxtaposition to many of the records Cranshaw had recorded around the same period, which featured jazz musicians recording commercial music in hopes of a popular hit.

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<sup>710</sup> Ibid.

<sup>711</sup> Feather, notes to Duke Pearson, *Wahoo!*

<sup>712</sup> Interestingly, Cranshaw and Roker would not record with Mary Lou Williams until 1974, despite working together in New York at the Hickory House, though this may be explained by the fact that Williams did not record at all in 1964.

<sup>713</sup> Willis Conover, notes to Dave Grusin, *Kaleidoscope*, (1964) Columbia Records, CL2344.

<sup>714</sup> Ibid.

<sup>715</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Dave Grusin" *The Jazz Discography Online*, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=38124>, accessed 10 February 2020.

<sup>716</sup> Willis Conover, notes to Dave Grusin, *Kaleidoscope*.

*Kaleidoscope* was the polar opposite, an artist who was working in the commercial side of music, recording a straight-ahead jazz album. In fact, Grusin commented on this situation in the notes. He said:

All this is part of making a living. I don't pretend to want to earn a living making records. If I ever succeed on records, I want it to be by doing my own thing, not by making a hit single. This album may not be the end of the world, but in Columbia's allowing me to do more or less what I wanted to do, this is the first time I've ever felt as relaxed in a studio as I would playing in a club.<sup>717</sup>

It is interesting to consider Cranshaw's own professional trajectory which grew to include jazz and other genres in equal measures. Cranshaw's association with people like Grusin, Milt Hinton and Quincy Jones influenced his path and led him to professional opportunities most jazz musicians did not pursue.

In November of 1964 Cranshaw was still almost exclusively recording jazz records and on November 30th he played on one of the most influential jazz recordings ever made, Joe Henderson's *Inner Urge*. This album was special for many reasons, it was the first time Henderson had recorded as a leader in a quartet setting,<sup>718</sup> it was the final time that Cranshaw recorded with both Tyner and Jones<sup>719</sup> and it is the first time that Cranshaw is the first soloist heard on an album. The title track, "Inner Urge" was an effort by Henderson to express his mood. He described the meaning of the song to Nat Hentoff in the liner notes:

I was consumed by an inner urgency which could only be satisfied through this tune. During that period, I was coping with anger and frustration that can come of trying to find your way in the maze of New York and trying to

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<sup>717</sup> Ibid.

<sup>718</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Joe Henderson"

<sup>719</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

adjust to the pace you have to set in hacking your way in that city in order to just exist.<sup>720</sup>

Cranshaw played the first solo on the title track, “Inner Urge,” and as Bob Blumenthal wrote in the liner notes to the 2004 reissue: “Giving Bob Cranshaw the first solo was a brilliant way to extend the brooding mood of the piece.”<sup>721</sup> Cranshaw, however, says that the decision that he would play first was never discussed before the take and as a result, he was not sure about the quality of his solo and commented about it in an interview with Tony Lannen. Cranshaw said:

I wasn’t expecting to play a solo on the tune. As soon as we’re getting ready to finish the head, Joe looks at me and I said (to myself) ‘What?!’ I started playing, but I really didn’t know what to play. And by the time of my second chorus, I was ready to go but no one else was ready, I tried to make a cue (by walking the last eight measures) but nobody looked up.<sup>722</sup>

In another interview with Lannen, Cranshaw even wondered if he could have played a better solo if given another chance.

I know I’m not a great soloist, but I know I can lay it on you! ... I wonder how different my approach on these tunes would be today. I think I might have a different out-put on some of these tunes, maybe I would feel more comfortable playing something like “Inner Urge” now than I did back then.<sup>723</sup>

Despite Cranshaw’s self-critique, his contributions are recognized by many as excellent. In the *Downbeat* review Harvey Pekar applauded both Cranshaw’s accompanying and soloing, he said: “Cranshaw, in addition to steady, big-toned section work, contributes a spare, imaginative solo on ‘Urge.’”<sup>724</sup> Joe Henderson also

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<sup>720</sup> Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Joe Henderson, *Inner Urge*, (1964 & 2004) Blue Note Records, CDP7-84189-2.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid.

<sup>722</sup> Lannen, “Bob Cranshaw”, 235.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., 240.

<sup>724</sup> Harvey Pekar, “Record Reviews: *Inner Urge*,” *Downbeat*, 2 June 1966, 30.

complimented Cranshaw's playing, Henderson said in the notes to *Inner Urge*: "He's got that big, fat juicy sound. He generates such a good feeling that I can't help but be affected by it."<sup>725</sup> Later in the notes Nat Hentoff described: "...the resonant suppleness of Bob Cranshaw's line..."<sup>726</sup>

The success of both the song "Inner Urge" and the album speak for themselves.

Bob Blumenthal wrote:

...*Inner Urge* was arguably the defining moment in Henderson's early career, not to mention the recording that ended any remaining debate regarding his prominence as a tenor stylist<sup>727</sup>

Pekar rated the album four stars in his *Downbeat* review,<sup>728</sup> and contemporary perspectives echo this sentiment with four star reviews in both the *Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*,<sup>729</sup> and in the *Rolling Stone Jazz and Blues Album Guide*.<sup>730</sup> Three songs on "Inner Urge" became jazz standards, "Inner Urge," "Isotope" and "You Know I Care," which, according to the Lord discography, as of this writing, have been recorded 124, 65 and 57 times, respectively.<sup>731</sup> Not every review was favorable though, with Doug Pringle from *Coda* writing that Henderson: "Cannot sustain his ingenuity over a whole record where everything depends on him..."<sup>732</sup> and he also criticizes the rhythm section: "Jones, Cranshaw, and Tyner offer the steady, unimaginative support to which we have been

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<sup>725</sup>Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Joe Henderson, *Inner Urge*.

<sup>726</sup> Ibid.

<sup>727</sup> Ibid.

<sup>728</sup> Harvey Pekar, "Record Reviews: *Inner Urge*."

<sup>729</sup> Richard Cook and Brian Morton, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*, 720.

<sup>730</sup> Steve Futterman, "Joe Henderson: *Inner Urge*" *The Rolling Stone Jazz and Blues Album Guide*, 1st ed. Edited by John Swenson (New York: Random House, 1999), 304.

<sup>731</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Inner Urge" *The Jazz Discography Online*, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=5411>, accessed 10 February 2020.

<sup>732</sup> Doug Pringle, "Joe Henderson: *Inner Urge*," *Coda*, July 1967, 29.



accustomed.”<sup>733</sup> Given the contrast of Pringle’s opinion with the success of the album and the success of all the musicians on it, his opinion seems nothing more than an outlier.

Cranshaw once again recorded with the ensemble of Shirley Scott, Stanley Turrentine and Otis Finch on December 5, 1964, for a live album entitled *Shirley Scott: Queen of the Organ*.<sup>734</sup> It was the fifth time that Cranshaw had recorded with Scott, but the first time he had recorded with her live.<sup>735</sup> This was not Cranshaw’s first ever live recording, having recorded live with Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Milt Jackson, Ben Webster and Joe Williams already.<sup>736</sup> It is surprising to hear that, even in a live setting, Cranshaw’s bass sound is present (especially during his walking solo on “Just In Time”) and never gets lost behind the organ. The album is considered one of the Scott’s finest recordings, rated four and a half stars by *Rolling Stone*,<sup>737</sup> and described as: “...an incendiary live performance...”<sup>738</sup> Writer Bob Hammer recognized Cranshaw for his supportive performance and his rapport with Finch, and wrote: “...the propulsive intensity of the team of Finch and Cranshaw... equally sustains all concerned throughout the album.”<sup>739</sup> The CD reissue of *Queen of the Organ* from 1993, which includes four additional tracks, was produced by Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen, with whom Cranshaw had recorded just weeks before.<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>733</sup> Ibid.

<sup>734</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>735</sup> Ibid.

<sup>736</sup> Ibid.

<sup>737</sup> John Swenson, “Shirley Scott: *Queen of the Organ*” *The Rolling Stone Jazz and Blues Album Guide*, 1st ed. Edited by John Swenson (New York: Random House, 1999), 602.

<sup>738</sup> Ibid.

<sup>739</sup> Bob Hammer, notes to Shirley Scott, *Queen of the Organ*, (1964) Impulse Records, A (S) 81.

<sup>740</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Shirley Scott, *Queen of the Organ*, (1993) Impulse/GRP, GRD 123.

Cranshaw's next recording, on December 7, 8 and 9, which was led by J.J. Johnson featured an all-star big band that included Jerome Richardson, Oliver Nelson, Bud Johnson, Jerry Dodgion, Ernie Royal, Clark Terry, Joe Wilder, Jimmy Cleveland, Hank Jones and Grady Tate.<sup>741</sup> It was Johnson's first recording as the leader of a big band, and featured arrangements by himself as well as Oliver Nelson and Gary McFarland.<sup>742</sup> Cranshaw is praised in the notes for his accompaniment, as Jack Somer wrote: "Ablly backed by the band (and the beat of Grady Tate on drums, Hank Jones and Bob Cranshaw)..."<sup>743</sup> Cranshaw also gets two solos, on "Stolen Moments" and "Stratusphunk," which can be considered high praise in a band that is so full of great soloists.

On the very same day that Cranshaw recorded the final session for *J.J.!*, December 9, he also recorded the first of several sessions under the leadership of Milt Jackson that was released as a part of two separate albums, one that included various artists titled *I/We Had a Ball*, and another under Milt Jackson's name titled *In a New Setting*.<sup>744</sup> *I/We Had a Ball* included the December 9 Jackson session but also included a number of artists leading their own groups for the Limelight Label, including Art Blakey, Quincy Jones' Orchestra, Oscar Peterson, Chet Baker, Dizzy Gillespie and Jackson.<sup>745</sup> Cranshaw also played in the Quincy Jones led big band that recorded on December 20, 1964, which included a roster of established jazz stars and soon-to-be stars including: Dizzy Gillespie, Freddie Hubbard, Nat Adderley, Curtis Fuller, J.J. Johnson, Kai

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<sup>741</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>742</sup> Jack Somer, notes to J.J. Johnson, *J.J.!: The Dynamic Sound of J.J. with Big Band*, (1964) RCA Victor, LPM3350.

<sup>743</sup> Ibid.

<sup>744</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>745</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Various Artists, *I/We Had a Ball*, (1964) Limelight Records, LM82002.

Winding, Melba Liston, Jerry Dodgion, Phil Woods, James Moody, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Benny Golson, Lucky Thompson, Pepper Adams, Milt Jackson and Art Blakey.<sup>746</sup> In addition to the session on December 9, the Jackson group recorded the remainder of the selections for *In A New Setting* on December 14, and 28. The Limelight label only existed from 1962-1966 due to complex packaging on their albums which proved expensive to produce as a result the albums were not available for very long and became difficult to find.<sup>747</sup>

Cranshaw's next recording was another large ensemble project, titled *I'm Trying to Get Home*.<sup>748</sup> It was under the leadership of Donald Byrd and produced by Duke Pearson for Blue Note records and the sessions spanned two days, December 18 and 19, 1964.<sup>749</sup> *I'm Trying to Get Home* was meant as a follow up to Byrd's previous recording, *A New Perspective*, an album that achieved relatively widespread popularity and peaked at 110 on the Billboard Hot 200 the week of August 15, 1964.<sup>750</sup> The arrangements on *I'm Trying to Get Home* feature a vocal group, similar to both *Up! And A New Perspective*. In the notes Nat Hentoff acknowledges the nod to *A New Perspective* in the ensemble, he wrote:

The album is an extension of *A New Perspective* (Blue Note 4124) in which Donald was heard with voices along with a jazz group. It was a striking departure for him and was well received by a broad spectrum of musicians, critics and non-professional listeners.<sup>751</sup>

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<sup>746</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>747</sup> Barry Kernfeld, "Limelight" Grove Music Online. 2003; <https://doi-org.unco.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.J269900>. Accessed 12 February 2020.

<sup>748</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>749</sup> Ibid.

<sup>750</sup> Anonymous, "Billboard Top LPs" Billboard, 15 August 1964, <https://www.billboard.com/charts/billboard-200/1964-08-15> accessed 13 February 2020.

<sup>751</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Donald Byrd, *A New Perspective*, (1964) Blue Note Records, BLP 4188.

Unfortunately, *I'm Trying to Get Home* album was critically panned, and did not achieve popular appeal either.

An undated session from this period was with Monty Alexander, listed in TJD as occurring in Los Angeles between 1964 and 1965.<sup>752</sup> The session yielded only two tracks that were released on Alexander's album *Spunky*.<sup>753</sup> Though the exact date is unknown, the location of the recording was actually New York, as stated in the notes to the album.<sup>754</sup> The tracks featured Alexander's working band, from the Playboy Club in New York which included Gene Bertoncini and Bruno Carr.<sup>755</sup>

### Part VII: 1965

1965 was an important year for Cranshaw's professional development, it included more recording for projects that were not strictly jazz albums, including the film soundtrack, *A Man Called Adam*, with music by Benny Carter.<sup>756</sup> Cranshaw played on two of the sixteen tracks recorded for the soundtrack, splitting the bass duties with George Duvivier and Aaron Bell.<sup>757</sup> The ensemble that Cranshaw played with included Nat Adderely, Kai Winding, Jerome Richardson, Roland Hanna and Walter Perkins.<sup>758</sup> The film had a star studded cast including Sammy Davis Jr., Frank Sinatra, Cicely Tyson, Louis Armstrong, Mel Torme, Morgan Freeman and Peter Lawford.<sup>759</sup> Exact dates are

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<sup>752</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>753</sup> Ibid.

<sup>754</sup> Paul Compton, notes to Monty Alexander, *Spunky*, (1965) LP, Pacific Jazz, PJ10094.

<sup>755</sup> Ibid.

<sup>756</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>757</sup> Ibid.

<sup>758</sup> Ibid.

<sup>759</sup> Anonymous, "A Man Called Adam," <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0060660/> accessed 24 February 2020.

not given for the sessions that Cranshaw played on but the sessions that featured Louis Armstrong (which Cranshaw did not play on) were recorded on November 20, 1965.<sup>760</sup>

Early in 1965 Cranshaw was back recording for Verve Records, under the co-leadership of Johnny Hodges and Wild Bill Davis for an album titled *Joe's Blues*.<sup>761</sup> This album stands out because it is the first recording on which Cranshaw is credited as having played electric bass, which he does on only one selection, "Somebody Loves Me."<sup>762</sup> This was the start of a long relationship that Cranshaw developed with the electric bass, though he wouldn't record on electric again until June of 1966.<sup>763</sup> Cranshaw splits the bass chair with Bob Bushnell and his contributions were praised by Stanley Dance: "The bass foundation is provided on some numbers by the brilliant Bob Cranshaw... It is Bob Cranshaw again who tastefully underlines the whole."<sup>764</sup>

On January 10 and 11, 1965, Cranshaw recorded a trio album for the Columbia label led Austrian pianist Friedrich Gulda that also included drummer Albert "Tootie" Heath.<sup>765</sup> Gulda was known for his classical work, having won The International Competition of Music in Geneva in 1946, and since that time touring the world playing Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Chopin.<sup>766</sup> Gulda was not a total newcomer to jazz, having played the Newport Festival<sup>767</sup> and Birdland in 1956,<sup>768</sup> but he was not as acclaimed in

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<sup>760</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

<sup>762</sup> Ibid.

<sup>763</sup> Ibid.

<sup>764</sup> Stanley Dance, notes to Johnny Hodges/Wild Bill Davis, *Joe's Blues*, (1965), Verve Records, V6-8617.

<sup>765</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>766</sup> Gordon Barnes, notes to Friedrich Gulda, *Ineffable: The Unique Jazz Piano of Friedrich Gulda*, (1965) Columbia Records, CL2346.

<sup>767</sup> Burt Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 264.

<sup>768</sup> Gordon Barnes, notes to Friedrich Gulda, *Ineffable: The Unique Jazz Piano of Friedrich Gulda*.

jazz as he was in classical music. Albert Heath had toured with Gulda in 1964 but this was the first time that Gulda had played with Cranshaw.<sup>769</sup> Their relationship was not negatively affected by this lack of familiarity, and Gordon Barnes described their rapport in the notes:

To hear his (Gulda's) trio play, one would never assume that one-third of it was newly met... until this recording session Cranshaw had never played with him. Yet the relationship between Cranshaw and Gulda, particularly on "Plant Some Flowers" and "The Horn and I" is so close and responsive that one might imagine they had been working together for years.<sup>770</sup>

Cranshaw spent January 15, 17 and 19 recording at Van Gelder Studios with an all-star big band (including Thad Jones, J.J. Johnson, Jerome Richardson, Phil Woods and Kenny Burrell) directed and arranged by Oliver Nelson, for vocalist Irene Reid's album *Room For One More*.<sup>771</sup> The album features Reid's recorded debut as a songwriter on two originals though the orchestrations are still by Nelson.<sup>772</sup> Reid's singing is as much a focus as Nelson's writing and the superb ensemble playing. At times the writing seems more abstract than Reid's obviously bluesy vocal concept, this is especially evident on "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye."

On January 22 Cranshaw recorded at Van Gelder Studios for a session under the leadership of Charlie Rouse, featuring Freddie Hubbard, McCoy Tyner and Billy Higgins.<sup>773</sup> This was the first time that Cranshaw had recorded with Rouse since he left Monk's group in 1964.<sup>774</sup> Unfortunately the session was not issued for 58 years, until

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<sup>769</sup> Ibid.

<sup>770</sup> Ibid.

<sup>771</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>772</sup> Del Shields, notes to Irene Reid, *Room for One More*, (1965) Verve Records V6-8621.

<sup>773</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>774</sup> Ibid.

Blue Note reissued Rouse's album *Bossa Nova Bacchanal*, in 2003.<sup>775</sup> Another unfortunate circumstance of this recording is that of the five selections recorded on the January 22 session, only one was included in the 2003 reissue.<sup>776</sup> The one selection that is available, "One For Five" is not, as the title of the album would suggest, a bossa nova. It is a Rouse original in the hard bop style, and it makes the unreleased tracks all the more appealing. There is no information in the notes to the 2003 reissue regarding the session that produced "One for Five" and the other four unreleased tracks.

On January 29 Cranshaw was back in Van Gelder's studio recording for a Jackie McLean album titled: *Right Now!*, featuring Larry Willis and Clifford Jarvis.<sup>777</sup> The music is a unique blend of avant-garde and more traditional jazz styles. In the notes to *Right Now!* Phyl Garland described McLean's approach:

Change and constant striving for the new, the untraversed, have earmarked his career and, most recently, he has conceived an impressive set of Blue Note albums which have solidified his position as a member of the avant-garde, while not sacrificing his affinity for the hard roots of swing.<sup>778</sup>

This was not an unknown style of music to Cranshaw, having played extensively with Rollins during his avant-garde period and having recorded Grachan Moncur's *Evolution* with McLean, but the ease with which Cranshaw was able to go from commercial recordings to experimental jazz is a unique gift. Cranshaw's flexibility was noted by Phyl Garland and Jackie Mclean in the notes to the original issue:

Bob Cranshaw is one of those highly competent but unpublicized bass players who are respected by fellow musicians, but so often are overlooked by the general public. A part of the New York Jazz milieu for several years, Cranshaw possesses what Mclean refers to as "a flowing contemporary

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<sup>775</sup> Ibid.

<sup>776</sup> Ibid.

<sup>777</sup> Ibid.

<sup>778</sup> Phyl Garland and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Jackie McLean, *Right Now!* (1965, 2004) Blue Note Records, CDP7-84215-2.

style,” flexible enough to range from stable, pulsating backing to extended solo work.<sup>779</sup>

One of the interesting elements of *Right Now!* is Cranshaw’s arco statement of the melody on Willis’ composition “Poor Eric” written for the recently deceased Eric Dolphy.<sup>780</sup> Writer Bob Blumenthal noted Cranshaw’s performance in the notes to the 2004 reissue of *Right Now!*:

“Poor Eric,” one of the most heart-rending themes of what was a very fertile period for jazz composition, was tailor-made for the saxophonist’s (McLean’s) undisguised anguish, and the decision to have Bob Cranshaw bow the melody in unison with the leader makes the sense of loss even more acute. That arco passage also reminds us that Cranshaw, who spent most of the following four decades playing an electric instrument, was (and is) one hell of an acoustic bassist.<sup>781</sup>

In 1965 there were several breaks in Cranshaw’s recording schedule, the first was immediately *Right Now!* And lasted from January 29 until February 26.<sup>782</sup> Other breaks in Cranshaw’s recording calendar were due to tours, but in this case, there is no concrete evidence to show that Cranshaw was out of New York. There is evidence of groups that Cranshaw had played in touring during this time period, Junior Mance for example,<sup>783</sup> but given the trend of Cranshaw’s recording calendar it is unlikely that he would leave New York for these kinds of gigs. He recently had turned down work with Monk for similar reasons. One possible explanation is the return of *The Merv Griffin Show*, which had brief runs in 1962 and 1963 but became a full-time program in 1965 and ran until 1986.<sup>784</sup> The

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<sup>779</sup> Phyl Garland and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Jackie McLean, *Right Now!*

<sup>780</sup> Ibid.

<sup>781</sup> Ibid.

<sup>782</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>783</sup> Anonymous, “Strictly Ad Lib: San Francisco” *Downbeat*, 11 February 1965, 44.

<sup>784</sup> Anonymous, “The Merv Griffin Show”

[https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0055691/?ref\\_=ttep\\_ep\\_tt](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0055691/?ref_=ttep_ep_tt) accessed 25 February 2020.



show resumed regular broadcasts in May of 1965,<sup>785</sup> and Cranshaw is one of two house bassists for Merv Griffin (the other being Ray Brown) listed on the *Jazz on the Screen* filmography.<sup>786</sup> Since there are two bassists listed as playing on the show it is not clear when Cranshaw began and ended playing for *The Merv Griffin Show*, but the timing of breaks in Cranshaw's jazz discography does seem to coincide with the production of this series.

Cranshaw recorded his next jazz album on February 26, a Blue Note session at Van Gelder's in Englewood Cliffs, under the leadership of Freddie Hubbard.<sup>787</sup> The session was for an album titled *Blue Spirits*, and it was one of two sessions that appeared on the original issue, with a third previously unissued session added to the 2004 reissue.<sup>788</sup> The session that Cranshaw played on as part of this album included Hubbard, Kiane Zawadi (previously known as Bernard McKinney,) James Spaulding, Hank Mobley, McCoy Tyner and Pete La Roca.<sup>789</sup> Cranshaw plays on the bulk of the album, three tracks of the five on the original issue (seven tracks on the reissue) including the title track. Nat Hentoff makes mention of Cranshaw's versatility in the notes to *Blue Spirits*: "The bassist... is Bob Cranshaw, who is known... increasingly, as a flexible studio musician in New York."<sup>790</sup> Hubbard also took an opportunity to recognize Cranshaw's abilities, he said: "Bob... has a big sound and what I call the Chicago feeling

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<sup>785</sup> Ibid.

<sup>786</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>787</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>788</sup> Ibid.

<sup>789</sup> Ibid.

<sup>790</sup> Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Freddie Hubbard, *Blue Spirits*, (1965, 2004) Blue Note Records, CDP7-46545-2.

- bluesy and deep into the time.”<sup>791</sup> Blumenthal characterized the album as one of Hubbard’s best, placing it in rarefied company. Blumenthal said:

While often overlooked, *Blue Spirits* is one of the greatest albums in Hubbard’s voluminous discography. It caught Hubbard’s trumpet playing at one of its peak moments, showcased his talent as both composer and arranger, and is arguably the best recorded example of the Hubbard/Spaulding partnership.<sup>792</sup>

After another break in his recording schedule starting after the *Blue Spirits* session on February 26, Cranshaw recorded the first session of four for another large ensemble Wes Montgomery album at Van Gelder studios on March 16.<sup>793</sup> This album reunited Cranshaw with Montgomery and Grady Tate and was the first of several records that Don Sebesky arranged for Montgomery.<sup>794</sup> The remaining three sessions for *Bumpin’* were recorded on May 18, 19 and 20 of the same year.<sup>795</sup> On two tracks, “Con Alma” and “A Quiet Thing” the rhythm section is augmented by Brazilian drummer Helicio Milito and feature percussionist Candido Camero.<sup>796</sup> Pianist on the session, Roger Kellaway recalled the process of rehearsing and teaching Montgomery the arrangements, because Montgomery could not read music.

Working with Wes, for *Bumpin’*, Don Sebesky overdubbed that string parts. This was not a big project, because Wes (Montgomery) didn’t read (music). So, it was me, Wes, Grady Tate and Bobby in a studio for four days learning the charts. Helping Wes learn the charts. And then we went into Rudy Van Gelder s studio and recorded the whole album. After that Don Sebesky wrote the string charts and came in and put the strings on. Some of the string stuff is related to what we came up with for the recorded session and some of it was already, I think one solo piece with the strings, he would have already had to have worked that out. Or it was Wes’ composition, so Don

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<sup>791</sup> Ibid.

<sup>792</sup> Ibid.

<sup>793</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>794</sup> Ibid.

<sup>795</sup> Ibid.

<sup>796</sup> Ibid.

listened to the composition and wrote the strings around that. It went together in pieces.<sup>797</sup>

The album moves between Latin and swinging grooves and is an excellent example of Montgomery during his Verve period.

Cranshaw had another break in his recording schedule between the session for *Bumpin'* on March 16 and his next recording sessions on April 13 and 14, recording in a large ensemble setting backing Stanley Turrentine for his album *Joyride* on Blue Note Records.<sup>798</sup> Interestingly, this is the first big band album that Turrentine made as a featured soloist.<sup>799</sup> The notes also mention that this group of musicians are all alumni of other Oliver Nelson large ensemble recordings.<sup>800</sup> There were two sessions for this album, April 13 and 14, but only the second session produced tracks used on the release.<sup>801</sup> The personnel is largely the same except that Herbie Hancock substitutes for Roger Kellaway and J.J. Johnson substitutes for Henry Coker on the session on the 14th.

After a sparse number of recordings between February and April (four sessions in three months) Cranshaw had a busy month of May, with ten sessions in one month.<sup>802</sup> The first three sessions in May were for the Wes Montgomery album *Bumpin'*, which finished on May 20.<sup>803</sup> The next day, May 21, Cranshaw recorded with a star studded big band at Van Gelder studios for an album of Lalo Schifrin's themes from television and

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<sup>797</sup> Roger Kellaway, personal telephone interview (Los Angeles CA and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>798</sup> Ibid.

<sup>799</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Joyride*, (1965) Blue Note Records, BLP4201.

<sup>800</sup> Ibid.

<sup>801</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>802</sup> Ibid.

<sup>803</sup> Ibid.

movies.<sup>804</sup> The liner notes described the band in glowing Hollywood analogy: “Mr. Shiffirin has assembled yet another all-star cast. His leads are New York’s finest dramatic stars... musically, that is.”<sup>805</sup> Indeed it was an all-star group, including: Freddie Hubbard, Clark Terry, J.J. Johnson, Bob Brookmeyer, Phil Woods, Jerome Richardson, James Moody and Kenny Burrell. Albums like *Once a Thief*, the several Quincy Jones albums and Carter’s *A Man Called Adam* show the increasing trend of Cranshaw’s career as studio recording musician.

Cranshaw next recorded on May 25 and 26 in a nonet led by Duke Pearson released on an album titled: *Honeybuns*.<sup>806</sup> It is a bit surprising that this album, made during the mid 1960’s when Duke Pearson was so heavily involved with the Blue Note label as A&R man, producer, composer, arranger and eventual vice-president, was released on Atlantic Records, not on Blue Note. The ensemble featured an ensemble of familiar musicians, though they had not recorded in this exact instrumentation and it was not a working ensemble prior to, or after, the sessions. *Honeybuns* reunited Cranshaw with Roker, George Coleman, Pepper Adams, Johnny Coles and Pearson and introduced him to trombonist Garnett Brown (who became a regular bandmate of Cranshaw’s) and Les Spann (this was the only time they recorded together.)<sup>807</sup> Five of the six titles on the album suggest female themes: “Honeybuns,” “New Girl,” “You Know I Care,” “Our Love,” and “Heavy Legs.” Later, when Cranshaw and Roker played in Pearson’s big

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<sup>804</sup> Johnny Magnus, notes to Lalo Schiffrin, *Music from the Motion Picture “Once a Thief” and other Themes*, (1965) Verve Records, V-8624.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid.

<sup>806</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>807</sup> Ibid.

band, Pearson's infatuation with women became clearer. Cranshaw described this in an interview with Ethan Iverson, he said:

Mickey is kind of a self-taught drummer, and we started to play with Duke Pearson's big band. Duke would never play. He was entertaining girls and stuff like that, and the band is playing. We were into the music; he was into the ladies.<sup>808</sup>

Cranshaw and Roker's connection was recognized by Nat Hentoff, who described it in the liner notes, he said: "Once more, Bob Cranshaw and Mickey Roker set and sustain a pliable, unobtrusive but pervasively *felt* beat."<sup>809</sup> Two of the songs on the album became popular with jazz musicians, "You Know I Care," (Which Pearson gave to Joe Henderson for his album *Inner Urge*) and "Is That So?" which have been recorded fifty-seven<sup>810</sup> and forty-three<sup>811</sup> times respectively.

Next Cranshaw spent May 27, 28 and 29 at Van Gelder's studios recording two albums with Dexter Gordon.<sup>812</sup> Gordon, and the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Barry Harris and Billy Higgins were consistent across both albums, but each paired Gordon with a different instrument.<sup>813</sup> For the first album, *Clubhouse*, recorded on May 27 Gordon was paired with Freddie Hubbard, for the second, *Gettin' Around*, recorded on May 28 and 29, Gordon was paired with Bobby Hutcherson.<sup>814</sup> On one track, "Devillette,"

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<sup>808</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>809</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Duke Pearson, *Honeybuns*, (1965) Atlantic Records, SD3002.

<sup>810</sup> Tom Lord "TJD-Online: You Know I Care" The Jazz Discography Online, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=5627>, accessed 27 February 2020.

<sup>811</sup> Tom Lord "TJD-Online: Is That So"" The Jazz Discography Online, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=15127>, accessed 27 February 2020.

<sup>812</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>813</sup> Ibid.

<sup>814</sup> Ibid.

from *Clubhouse* Cranshaw is replaced by bassist Ben Tucker, (Tucker also wrote “Devilette”) a fact which Ira Gitler missed in his original 1979 liner notes.<sup>815</sup>

The ambitious recording schedule was planned around Gordon’s availability, since at the time he was residing in Europe.<sup>816</sup> Unfortunately, given just days to make both records, and given that Gordon was still struggling with addiction to drugs,<sup>817</sup> the music did not turn out as planned. Gordon was not happy with his performances, saying in a letter to Franciss Wolff: “Somehow we got through the dates which I think were O.K.... Too bad I wasn’t in really good shape because the albums would have been a bitch.”<sup>818</sup> Wolff’s letter back to Gordon conveyed Lion’s similar feelings, he wrote:

(Lion) says that he was very disappointed in (*Clubhouse*)... The rhythm is not together and the whole thing sounds bad. In other words, the session was no good and we do not plan to release it. Therefore, we will just have to make another session to replace this one.<sup>819</sup>

Though all parties agreed that it was not the best representation of Gordon’s abilities, they disagreed on whether to release *Clubhouse* and, once Blue Note had been sold, Gordon approved its release.<sup>820</sup> Writer Bob Blumenthal disagreed with the negative assessment of the rhythm section and summarized the music by writing:

In retrospect, this music lacks the charge of Gordon’s best Blue Notes... yet the rhythm section sounds together enough, and even an impeded Gordon creates such memorable performances ... Like so much of what Dexter Gordon recorded, *Clubhouse* is a definite keeper.<sup>821</sup>

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<sup>815</sup> Ira Gitler and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Dexter Gordon, *Clubhouse* (1965, 2006) Blue Note Records, CDP7-844450-2.

<sup>816</sup> Ibid.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid.

<sup>818</sup> Ibid.

<sup>819</sup> Ibid.

<sup>820</sup> Ibid.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid.

The second album, *Gettin' Around* recorded in two sessions on May 28 and 29 had no such problems with its scheduled release and was first issued in 1966.<sup>822</sup> Bob Blumenthal notes that the rhythm section is exceptionally supportive and identical to the one used on *The Sidewinder*, and states:

The personnel and the results captured in this recording give further testimony to the spontaneous skills and of both the leader and his most worthy constituents... There was the added attraction of reuniting Harris with Bob Cranshaw and Billy Higgins, thus reconstituting the rhythm section heard on Lee Morgan's hit "The Sidewinder."<sup>823</sup>

In fact, these two albums are the only other opportunity to hear the rhythm section from *The Sidewinder*. Gitler noted the bands' excitement to play with Gordon, (this was Cranshaw's first recording with Gordon) who was so rarely in the United States during this period, he wrote:

I think it is evident that the supporting cast was with Dexter all the way in this album. He set the tone and they fell right in with him. Since he is an expatriate, it is not often that the New York-based musicians receive a chance to play in his company. Gordon's charm and musical inspiration make his company both delightful and stimulating.<sup>824</sup>

For his part, Cranshaw enjoyed Gordon's company and noted his imposing physical presence, and said in an interview with Ethan Iverson:

Wonderful. A lot of fun. He and Sonny, because they're big guys – with the horn in their hands, a tenor looks like an alto saxophone... Dexter was such a tall guy when he played the tenor. You look at it and it looked like an alto saxophone to me because he was so big.<sup>825</sup>

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<sup>822</sup> Ira Gitler and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Dexter Gordon, *Gettin' Around*, (1965, 2005) Blue Note Records, CDP7-46681-2.

<sup>823</sup> Ibid.

<sup>824</sup> Ibid.

<sup>825</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

In mid-1965 Cranshaw made a second recording with the vibraphonist Johnny Lytle, titled: *The Loop*.<sup>826</sup> *The Loop* featured nearly identical personnel to the album *The Village Caller*, (which Cranshaw made with Lytle in 1963) but *The Loop* also included Wynton Kelly.<sup>827</sup> There were two sessions that produced *The Loop* and on the first session George Duvivier played bass.<sup>828</sup> The original issue of *The Loop* does not list Cranshaw as performing on the album, and only lists Duvivier,<sup>829</sup> however, a Wynton Kelly discography compiled by Claude Schlouch lists Cranshaw as performing on the second recording date.<sup>830</sup> A clear difference can be heard between the bass sounds on the first session, which did not include Wynton Kelly and the second session. Given that Cranshaw was the bassist on *The Village Caller*, which included identical personnel to *The Loop*, it is very likely that Cranshaw is the bassist on the second session.

On June 17 Cranshaw rejoined Sonny Rollins for a live concert at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.<sup>831</sup> The band featured two drummers, Mickey Roker and Billy Higgins as well as pianist Tommy Flanagan.<sup>832</sup> The concert was recorded and released as an album titled *There Will Never Be Another You*. The album is unique because it features two drummers, and, as it was an outdoor concert, it was subject to the elements, and it rained.<sup>833</sup> In the *Downbeat* review of the concert (which was also turned into the

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<sup>826</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>827</sup> Ibid.

<sup>828</sup> Ibid.

<sup>829</sup> Peter Drew, notes to Johnny Lytle, *The Loop*, (1965) Tuba Records, LP5001.

<sup>830</sup> Claude Schlouch, *Wynton Kelly: A Discography*. (Marseille: Eigenverlag, 1993)

<sup>831</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>832</sup> Ibid.

<sup>833</sup> George Hoefler, "Caught in the Act: Sonny Rollins/Bud Freeman Jazz in the Garden" *Downbeat*, 12 August 1965, 39.



liner notes to the album)<sup>834</sup> George Hoefer noted the unusual circumstances surrounding the concert, he wrote:

Shortly after Rollins' sidemen positioned themselves and their instruments, a light drizzle began - and the faint sounds of a tenor saxophone playing "Will You Still Be Mine?" could be heard in the distance... As the saxophonist improvised his unique phrases... apparently oblivious to the rain... and continued to wander as he played.<sup>835</sup>

One can hear Rollins' wanderings (literal, not musical) as he comes in and out of range of the microphones. Drummer Mickey Roker recalled both the elements as well as the impromptu nature of the performance, he said:

I had been playing with Sonny for a couple of gigs. I went to set up and I see Billy Higgins setting up too. I say, "What's happening?" and he said I guess he wants both of us to play on this gig. So, the way we did it was, on one chorus I play time and he would embellish, and the next chorus he would play time and I would embellish. Just color up. That's what we did on the whole record date. And it rained! We were outside and it was summer, and the rain was beating on the cymbals. That's why it took so long for them to release that album cause they had to get the technology to get the raindrops from messing up the sound.<sup>836</sup>

Despite the odd conditions, the music on *There Will Never Be Another You* is high quality and George Hoefer praised the rhythm sections accompaniment throughout the concert. He said: "Higgins, Roker, Cranshaw and Flanagan gave sensitive support throughout the concert."<sup>837</sup> The uniqueness of and the performances on *There Will Never Be Another You* makes it worth listening to.

Cranshaw's next session was on June 25, for a Lee Morgan session titled *The Gigolo*.<sup>838</sup> *The Gigolo* reunited Cranshaw with Billy Higgins on a Lee Morgan album

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<sup>834</sup> George Hoefer, notes to Sonny Rollins, *There Will Never Be Another You*, (1965) Impulse, IA9349.

<sup>835</sup> Ibid.

<sup>836</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Mickey Roker"

<sup>837</sup> George Hoefer, "Caught in the Act: Sonny Rollins/Bud Freeman Jazz in the Garden," 39.

<sup>838</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

with the additions of Harold Mabern and Wayne Shorter.<sup>839</sup> The album was undeniably successful, (though not as successful as *The Sidewinder*, despite drawing inspiration from that album.) Harold Mabern considered *The Gigolo* one of his favorite recordings.

“That’s one of my favorites, mainly because of Wayne Shorter. Bob and I didn’t do a lot of recording after the MJT+3... But the Gigolo is one of my favorites...”<sup>840</sup> It is, according to Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, one of Morgan’s most highly regarded offerings. Blumenthal wrote:

Nat Hentoff was right on target when he predicted that *The Gigolo* would come to be regarded as a timeless session. Many Lee Morgan fans have cited the album as one of the trumpeter’s best, and it indeed features inspired playing on a superior program of music.<sup>841</sup>

This rosy assessment of the music is, however, not without contradiction. According to the Morgan biographer Jeffery McMillan the session was plagued with issues. He wrote:

...Morgan and his studio band failed to finish the recording in one session. The tune that proved hardest to capture was Morgan’s composition “Yes I Can, No You Can’t.” After numerous false starts, the band made it through the head melody to Morgan’s solo in the twenty second take... The trumpeter struggles through an awkward two-chorus solo... Morgan sounds out of practice: the trumpet is playing him for a change. Shorter does not improve on the mood in his solo, and the performance is whistled dead in the middle of the saxophonist’s statement... The whole band lacks vitality. For the next twelve takes, the group struggles to get through the head, and after his playing halts a take, Morgan, with disgust exclaims, “(I) can’t get past the first fucking bar!”<sup>842</sup>

McMillan also described a suggestion from engineer Rudy Van Gelder in the 34th take, instructing Higgins: “Billy, play the backbeat,” to which Morgan responds, “Yeah, Billy,

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<sup>839</sup> Ibid.

<sup>840</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 12 October 2018)

<sup>841</sup> Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Gigolo*, (1965, 2006) Blue Note Records, CDP7-84212-2.

<sup>842</sup> Jeffery S. McMillan, *Delightfulee: The Life and Music of Lee Morgan* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008), 144-145.

play the *blackbeat*.”<sup>843</sup> In listening to “Yes I Can, No You Can’t” one can hear the unusually heavy backbeat that Higgins plays on the track. According to McMillan, the band pushed on to take 49 before abandoning the song and scheduling another session.<sup>844</sup> This description is supported by the second session necessary to complete the date, which occurred about a week later on July 1.<sup>845</sup>

The first session on June 25 only produced one usable take, Shorter’s “Trapped,” all of the other songs on *The Gigolo* came from the secondary July 1 session.<sup>846</sup> Apparently, the struggles continued on the second date, with 17 more takes necessary to get a good take of “Yes I Can, No You Can’t” and 32 takes for “Speedball.”<sup>847</sup> Despite the problems during the sessions, the music on *The Gigolo* has become some of Morgan’s most admired playing, in a band of superb, sympathetic musicians. Hentoff singled out Cranshaw’s accompaniment on the title track, “The Gigolo,” he wrote: “On This Track, as on the other, it’s worth listening one or more times just to Bob Cranshaw’s resilient bass line.”<sup>848</sup> Blumenthal also noted the chemistry of the group in his notes in the reissue, he wrote: “This was a highly compatible group, with each musician at the top of his game and clearly inspired by his partners.”<sup>849</sup> Drummer Joe Farnsworth reflected on the title track on *The Gigolo* and called it perfect.

...from like 1986-2020 I would listen to “The Gigolo” almost every day. At least one time before I went out. If you could capture that, it was the epitome of what I loved about music. The tempo, Mabe’s first chorus out front. Shit.

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<sup>843</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>844</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>845</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>846</sup> Ibid.

<sup>847</sup> Ibid.

<sup>848</sup> Nat Hentoff and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Lee Morgan, *The Gigolo*.

<sup>849</sup> Ibid.

It's perfect. And his beat is right in the middle. Not pushing, not behind. Just right dead in the middle. But it moves.<sup>850</sup>

On July 21 Cranshaw went back to work for Shirley Scott, recording for her album *Latin Shadows*.<sup>851</sup> It is notable for the absence of Stanley Turrentine and Otis Finch, of whom, one or both had been present on all of the other recordings that Cranshaw had made with Scott to this point.<sup>852</sup> Cranshaw plays on half of the album, two tracks on the “A” side, the other four represented on the “B” side.<sup>853</sup> which features a small ensemble, the “A” side features a much larger group. As the title suggests, all of the music is in various Latin styles. *Latin Shadows* is Cranshaw’s first of several recordings with drummer Mel Lewis.<sup>854</sup>

The next album Cranshaw recorded was Horace Silver’s *The Cape Verdean Blues*, recorded on October 1 and 22.<sup>855</sup> This was the first time that Cranshaw recorded with Silver.<sup>856</sup> In addition to Silver and Cranshaw the album featured J.J. Johnson, Woody Shaw, Joe Henderson and Roger Humphries.<sup>857</sup> Silver explained that music on the album was inspired by: “Cape Verdean Portuguese Folk music from the Cape Verde Islands... Brazilian samba...(and) good old American funky blues.”<sup>858</sup> Silver’s father was a native of the Cape Verde Islands.<sup>859</sup> In his autobiography Silver explained another

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<sup>850</sup> Joe Farnsworth, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO: 23 March 2020)

<sup>851</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>852</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: Shirley Scott” *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=9871> accessed 1 March 2020.

<sup>853</sup> George Hofer, notes to Shirley Scott, *Latin Shadows*, (1965) Impulse Records, A(S) 93.

<sup>854</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>855</sup> Ibid.

<sup>856</sup> Ibid.

<sup>857</sup> Ibid.

<sup>858</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Horace Silver, *The Cape Verdean Blues*, (1965, 2003) Blue Note Records, CDP7-84220-2.

<sup>859</sup> Ibid.

source that helped produce *The Cape Verdean Blues*: “‘The African Queen,’ ...was inspired by a tune sung by a tribal group on some African folk music records I bought... when I was searching for inspiration to do something different.”<sup>860</sup>

Indeed, the music on *The Cape Verdean Blues* was different from what Silver normally wrote, which was generally in the style of hard bop. Cranshaw described his perception of the Silver’s music in an interview with Ethan Iverson:

...that was funny because before, I liked the way Horace comped. It was moving, so I wanted to record with him. But when I started to record with him, he wrote all the lines out. I said, “Shit!” because I had to play lines that he [wrote] because he’s playing the same line. I wanted to play with him when it was not that, but I didn’t get that. When he called me, it was always playing the lines, but I enjoyed (it) because I enjoy that kind of feel.<sup>861</sup>

Cranshaw was specifically referring to the written bass lines which were a staple of the arrangements on *The Cape Verdean Blues*. Most of Silver’s compositions prior to this album featured walking bass lines, improvised by the bassist. Two of the main reasons Cranshaw had been looking forward to playing with Silver were: the freedom of improvising the bass lines, and the walking feel. He explained:

I know, which was disappointing for me ‘cause Horace has a great feel for 4. And I was looking forward, I said ah shit, you know, god damn I’m gonna lock. We gonna lock down and then he throws all this shit out, I’m saying what the fuck? (laughs) You know, I was looking for something else, so you know he kinda tricked me on that one. He got me on that one. It took me a minute to be mentally prepared cause I wanted to play some shit with him playing 4, cause 4 is my shit. When he gave me that I said damn, this ain’t my shit! You know but I’m sayin it was a lot of concentration. It wasn’t in my comfort zone. I had a good time ‘cause it was such great guys and Horace lays it out...<sup>862</sup>

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<sup>860</sup> Horace Silver, *Let’s Get to the Nitty Gritty: The Autobiography of Horace Silver*, ed. Phil Pastras (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 167.

<sup>861</sup> Ethan Iverson, “Interview with Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>862</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 May 2016).

Cranshaw held Silver in such high regard though, that he was willing to adapt his style to fit Silver's musical desire for the album. Cranshaw explained:

I played what he played, and I didn't divvy from what he played. I didn't go to another place unless he was soloing then it gave me a chance, and I played my shit on the chords. But other than that, I was dead in his ass on all of it, 'cause that was the way he wrote. That was the way he wrote... he played a lot of the bass lines for the shit, and the horns did the harmony and he played the lines with the bass.<sup>863</sup>

Cranshaw's attitude was to put the music first, despite his preference for a different style, which allowed the music to be even more effective. He reflected on this philosophy in an interview. He said:

I don't fight it. I take it. "Is that where you want it? Cool." But this is what I'm going to bring and it's gonna feel good... that lady in that wheelchair, I'm gonna make her dance tonight. And that was my feeling, playing with Horace Silver, playing with any of those people. That's my focus.<sup>864</sup>

In the 1966 *Downbeat* review Michael Zwerin praised the effect of repeated figures in Silver's compositions. He said:

They are usually accompanied by a distinctive rhythm section figure that often continues behind the solos. This gives each tune an individual character, permitting the soloist to play the "tune" instead of the changes. They set up a special kind of freedom for the soloist, and there is a beautiful tension that comes from the shackled rhythm section in opposition to the unfettered soloist... One starts wondering if they will ever release the growing tension by breaking into straight time. After a while the listener becomes hypnotized by the pattern and how it is affecting the soloist. The rhythm section players themselves seem to pick up momentum after preliminary tedium. The phrases are simple, their extensive repetition complex.<sup>865</sup>

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<sup>863</sup> Ibid.

<sup>864</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>865</sup> Michael Zwerin, "Horace Silver: The Cape Verdean Blues," *Downbeat Magazine*, 24 March 1966, 34, 36.

In recognition of Silver's work, Zwerin awarded *The Cape Verdean Blues* four and a half stars in his review.<sup>866</sup>

All of the personnel on the album besides Cranshaw and Johnson were members of Silver's working group,<sup>867</sup> though Cranshaw would go on to record with Silver numerous times after *The Cape Verdean Blues*.<sup>868</sup> Nat Hentoff commented on the membership of Silver's group's and the decision to include Cranshaw for the recording in the notes to the original release. He wrote:

At the time the present album was made, Horace was in the process of switching bass players, but had not yet definitely settled on anyone for this spot. He therefore decided to call in an old pro, Bob Cranshaw, whose dependable work has been heard in literally dozens of hard-swinging combos on records and around New York (The permanent bass assignment later went to Larry Ridley.)<sup>869</sup>

Cranshaw's next studio dates October 25 and were led by vibraphonist Dave Pike with an all-star band including: Herbie Hancock, Clark Terry, and Grady Tate.<sup>870</sup>

Interestingly, Herbie Hancock plays organ throughout the recording, and according to the liner notes, it is his first recording on the organ.<sup>871</sup> The music on the album is entirely R&B, boogaloo and Latin inspired, there is no straight-ahead swing on the entire album. The notes to the album comment on the blending of musical styles into different musical contexts:

A "Something-for-everybody" attitude has been assumed by the record industry... first and foremost this is a jazz album. But appreciation of the music contained herein is not limited to the jazz audience... Dave has

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<sup>866</sup> Ibid.

<sup>867</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Horace Silver, *The Cape Verdean Blues*.

<sup>868</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>869</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Horace Silver, *The Cape Verdean Blues*.

<sup>870</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>871</sup> Joel Dorn, notes to Dave Pike, *Jazz for The Jet Set*, (1965) Atlantic Records, SD1475.

utilized jazz as well as Latin and out-an-out pop material to come up with an exciting sound of his own.<sup>872</sup>

Cranshaw is credited as playing bass on half of the album, which he splits with Jimmy Lewis.<sup>873</sup> Though neither the Lord Discography, nor the notes to the album specify which bass Cranshaw played, the sound is unmistakably the electric bass. This would make *Jazz for The Jet Set* the first full album on which Cranshaw played electric bass. Also interesting is the inclusion of the Ben Tucker composition “Devilette,” which appeared on Dexter Gordon’s *Clubhouse* album which featured Cranshaw. On the Gordon recording Cranshaw was replaced by Ben Tucker on bass for that particular track,<sup>874</sup> but Cranshaw plays on the Pike version.

On December 18 Cranshaw was back in Van Gelder studios recording for a Hank Mobley session titled: *A Caddy For Daddy*, which featured Lee Morgan, Curtis Fuller, McCoy Tyner and Billy Higgins.<sup>875</sup> Since *The Sidewinder* had been recorded Cranshaw and Higgins had not recorded together until 1965.<sup>876</sup> By 1965 though, *The Sidewinder* had become the most successful Blue Note record ever and in 1965 alone Cranshaw and Higgins recorded 6 albums together.<sup>877</sup> *A Caddy For Daddy* is a superb Blue Note hard bop session that features the obligatory boogaloo (“A Caddy For Daddy”) but also extended modal compositions. Cranshaw received a nod from Ira Gitler in the notes to the original issue, he said:

In recent years he (Cranshaw) has been a busy free-lance around New York, heard to great advantage with Sonny Rollins, and on several Blue Note sessions. Cranshaw has strength, fine disposition and ability to find good

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<sup>872</sup> Ibid.

<sup>873</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>874</sup> Ibid.

<sup>875</sup> Ibid.

<sup>876</sup> Ibid.

<sup>877</sup> Ibid.



notes - traits that are necessary to help fulfill the demanding workhorse role of the bassist.<sup>878</sup>

The last session Cranshaw recorded in 1965 was on December 22, he is listed as recording with vocalist Esther Phillips<sup>879</sup>. Cranshaw's discography shows him playing the first of two sessions for the album *Esther Phillips Sings* which featured a large ensemble under the direction of Oliver Nelson.<sup>880</sup> There is some confusion about the exact personnel on the album, as both Cranshaw and George Duvivier are listed as recording on the same December 22 recording date.<sup>881</sup> The confusion may be because Duvivier is listed as playing another session (also under the direction of Oliver Nelson) on the same date.<sup>882</sup> Since the ensemble is a big band it is very difficult to distinguish the sound of the bass and it seems impossible to determine who that bassist on the session is with any degree of certainty. There is no confusion about a second session that Cranshaw played on for *Esther Phillips Sings*, which was made on January 24, 1966.<sup>883</sup>

### **Part VIII: 1966**

From 1965 to 1966 Cranshaw's total number of jazz recordings went up slightly from 32 in 1965 to 38 in 1966.<sup>884</sup> In 1964 he recorded 56 jazz recording sessions and as 1965 and 1966 progressed, he frequently found opportunities to record outside of jazz (*The Merv Griffin Show*, various movie soundtracks, etc...) The number of sessions reflected in the TJD are not an accurate representation of the totality of Cranshaw's

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<sup>878</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Hank Mobley, *A Caddy for Daddy*, (1965) Blue Note Records, BLP4230.

<sup>879</sup> Ibid.

<sup>880</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>881</sup> Ibid.

<sup>882</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: George Duvivier" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2350&rid=111019> Accessed 2 March 2020.

<sup>883</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>884</sup> Ibid.

recorded output since jazz is the sole focus of TJD and Cranshaw's work encompassed a much broader spectrum of music. Unfortunately, other discographies are not as detailed as TJD and do not have recording dates, instead focusing on release dates, and more commercial recordings like music for radio and television advertisements are totally unaccounted for.

Several of the recordings Cranshaw made in 1966 do not have information about specific dates, only the year. One is Duke Pearson's *Prairie Dog*, recorded in three separate sessions in 1966.<sup>885</sup> Cranshaw played on all of the sessions for *Prairie Dog*, which also featured Harold Vick, Mickey Roker, Johnny Coles, Gene Bertoncini and James Spaulding. One of the interesting elements of this album is the composition "The Fakir," which mixes 3/4 and 5/4 time. *Prairie Dog* is also interesting because Pearson plays two duets with Cranshaw on "Hush-a-bye" and "Angel Eyes." "Hush-a-Bye" features Pearson on celeste, and both give hauntingly beautiful performances.

Another album dated only to 1966 with no specific dates listed is the Clark Terry and Bob Brookmeyer album *Gingerbread Men*.<sup>886</sup> Cranshaw had recorded with Terry over a dozen times by the time this album was recorded, dating all the way back to 1960, but only as a sideman.<sup>887</sup> Cranshaw's performance is excellent on "Haig and Haig," when the band drops out at the start of Terry's solo and the two play several choruses as a duo. In the notes, for this track Nat Hentoff described the rhythm section, he wrote: "...again, the rhythm section flows firmly and deeply."<sup>888</sup>

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<sup>885</sup> Ibid.

<sup>886</sup> Ibid.

<sup>887</sup> Ibid.

<sup>888</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Clark Terry and Bob Brookmeyer, *Gingerbread Men*, (1966) Mainstream Records, MRL 373.

On January 13, 1966, Cranshaw recorded a session led by Nat Adderley for an album titled: *Sayin' Somethin'*.<sup>889</sup> The album was recorded in two sessions, Cranshaw played on the second session, which also featured: Joe Henderson, Roy McCurdy and Herbie Hancock or John Asbury on piano. Like so many of the records that Cranshaw played on around this time period, the material is quite varied and was meant to capture a wide audience. Marian McPartland summarized this phenomenon in her *Downbeat* review, she wrote: "There is something here for everybody - plenty of rock-and-roll, some soul... plus an occasional hint of the avant-garde..."<sup>890</sup> In the notes to *Sayin' Somethin'* Adderley was asked who he considered his audience to be.

Q: Who are you aiming this album at? Your jazz audience, a pop audience, rock and rollers, or who:

Adderley: I don't care who listens to this album - or who reads the notes. I don't care what they think of it themselves in the a musical sense. Whether they think they are jazz lovers, the avant-garde, soul people, rock and rollers, critics, or other musicians. I just want the music to speak for itself.<sup>891</sup>

On February 7 Cranshaw contributed one song to a Joe Zawinul album titled *Money in the Pocket*.<sup>892</sup> Cranshaw plays on the title track, a boogaloo that has a specific ostinato bass line that the piano and bass play in unison. The track "Money in the Pocket" featured an entirely different band than the rest of the album.<sup>893</sup> The song was successful enough to be included as a regular part of the Cannonball Adderley group's repertoire,

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<sup>889</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>890</sup> Marian McPartland, "Record Reviews: Nat Adderley: *Sayin' Something*," *Downbeat Magazine*, 30 June 1966, 28.

<sup>891</sup> Bob Rolontz, notes to Nat Adderley, *Sayin' Somethin'*, (1966) Atlantic Records, LP/SD1460.

<sup>892</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>893</sup> Ibid.

heard on multiple live recordings of Cannonball's group and recorded by Ramsey Lewis as well.<sup>894</sup>

One of Cranshaw's best straight-ahead jazz recordings from this period is Bobby Hutcherson's *Happenings*, recorded on February 6.<sup>895</sup> The band is a quartet of Hutcherson, Cranshaw, Herbie Hancock and Joe Chambers.<sup>896</sup> The whole album is original music composed by Hutcherson, with the exception of the song "Maiden Voyage," by Herbie Hancock. This was the first time "Maiden Voyage" had been recorded since Hancock's 1965 album of the same name.<sup>897</sup> One of the standout tracks is "Bouquet," on which Cranshaw plays a similar ostinato style heard on *The Cape Verdean Blues*. Cranshaw's playing was recognized by Leonard Feather in the original liner notes, he wrote: "Note the simplicity of the lines in Herbie's spare elliptical solo, and the added dimension supplied by Bob Cranshaw's bass accents."<sup>898</sup> In the notes Hutcherson also praised Cranshaw's playing, while recognizing how in demand Cranshaw had become. He said: "I've admired his work since I first met him... Lately he's been doing a lot of studio pop work around New York as well as jazz dates."<sup>899</sup> This work in studios that Hutcherson classified as "pop" can be the main reason that Cranshaw's jazz recordings were more sporadic than in prior years. Cranshaw is also called out by Bob Blumenthal in the notes to the 2006 reissue, he wrote:

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<sup>894</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Money in the Pocket" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=4580> Accessed 2 March 2020.

<sup>895</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>896</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>897</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Bobby Hutcherson, *Happenings*, (1966, 2006) Blue Note Records, BLP4231.

<sup>898</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>899</sup> *Ibid.*

Choosing the right players for this project was critical, and it is doubtful that Hutcherson could have found a better supporting group for the music at hand. Bob Cranshaw keeps the music grounded without inhibiting its flow...<sup>900</sup>

At a time when so many of the jazz albums being made were altering repertoire, arrangements and personnel in order to appear to wider audiences, it is refreshing to hear an album like *Happenings* which is as purely a jazz album as can be made.

Cranshaw's next recording was on March 18 for a session for Blue Note under the leadership of Hank Mobley, with arrangements by Duke Pearson, for an album called: *A Slice of the Top*.<sup>901</sup> The ensemble is an all-star octet of Blue Note regulars and Pearson's writing is one of the main highlights of the session. The album went unissued until 1979 and the notes explain that four Mobley compositions on the album were written while he was serving time in prison on a narcotics charge.<sup>902</sup> Despite Mobley's personal issues, Cranshaw had only positive experiences working with him. Cranshaw described his impressions of Mobley in an interview, he said:

Oh, Hank. Wonderful. Wonderful experience. Hank was such a beautiful guy. Any time you did a record date, Hank was right on. Whatever problems he would have, he was just right on at the date. You never felt anything but a positive thing from Hank. He wasn't like a real up guy; he was quiet. We would play but I never really got to know Hank.<sup>903</sup>

Mobley's inspiration for the instrumentation was Miles Davis' *Birth of the Cool*, and he asked Pearson to complete the arrangements.<sup>904</sup> Mobley explained: "Duke Pearson's good with the pen. I told him 'If I do it, (write the orchestrations) it might take two

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<sup>900</sup> Ibid.

<sup>901</sup> Ibid.

<sup>902</sup> John B Litweiler, notes to Hank Mobley, *A Slice of the Top*, (1966, 1979) Blue Note Records, LT995.

<sup>903</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>904</sup> Ibid.

weeks, but you can do it in a day.”<sup>905</sup> The rhythm section of Tyner, Cranshaw and Higgins is the same as Mobley’s previous session, *A Caddy for Daddy*, recorded exactly three months prior to *A Slice of the Top*.<sup>906</sup>

Cranshaw’s next recordings were two sessions on March 28 and April 1 for a Kai Winding album titled *Dirty Dog*.<sup>907</sup> This album is a commercially oriented date (despite the multiple trombones) with respect to repertoire: “The Sidewinder,” “Cantaloupe Island” and “Blind Man, Blind Man” and with respect to instrumentation: the album features electric bass and guitar.<sup>908</sup> The Lord Discography does not credit Cranshaw specifically as playing electric bass on the session, but the notes to the album, and the sound of the bass confirm that it is indeed an electric bass on the album. The rhythm section of Cranshaw, Herbie Hancock, Kenny Burrell (listed as Buzzy Bavarian in the album notes) and Grady Tate is excellent. The band is described in the notes as: “...an electronic, rock solid rhythm section...”<sup>909</sup> and that the music “...makes no compromises with pure jazz, stresses experimentation, and yet rocks with discotheque rhythms...”<sup>910</sup>

On April 8 and May 27 Cranshaw recorded for a Lee Morgan album, *Delightfulee Morgan*.<sup>911</sup> The split session reflected two separate ensembles, the first, an 11 piece ensemble with arrangements by Oliver Nelson, the second, a quintet.<sup>912</sup> The album was well received and earned five stars in the 1968 *Downbeat* review.<sup>913</sup> Johnson also

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<sup>905</sup> Ibid.

<sup>906</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>907</sup> Ibid.

<sup>908</sup> Stan Levine, notes to Kai Winding, *Dirty Dog*, (1966) Verve Records, VK10433.

<sup>909</sup> Ibid.

<sup>910</sup> Ibid.

<sup>911</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>912</sup> Ibid.

<sup>913</sup> Ralph Johnson, “Record Reviews: Lee Morgan, *Delightfulee Morgan*,” *Downbeat Magazine*, 7 March 1968, 30.

recognized the familiar rhythm team of Tyner, Cranshaw and Higgins, (who appear on the second of the two sessions) he wrote: “Tyner... with the splendid backing of Higgins and Cranshaw, turns in a highly dynamic performance.”<sup>914</sup> Morgan also singled Cranshaw out for praise in the notes to *Delightfulee*, he said:

He’s developed into one of the most reliable of bassists, and... one of the workingest men in town. It can be a TV background, a film track, backing for a singer, or a combo date like this - he’ll be just right for everything that’s assigned to him.<sup>915</sup>

The 2007 reissue of the album offers several bonus tracks of the songs performed by the smaller group on the original issue. Blumenthal offers that Philly Joe Jones’ playing on the large group session may not have met Alfred Lion’s expectations, but that the arranging and the ensemble redeem the music enough to justify its inclusion in the reissue. He wrote:

...enough music had been produced at the large-group session to fill a standard vinyl album, yet Lion had chosen to leave the majority of this session in the vaults. Aural evidence suggests that Lion was bothered by an overall heaviness in the orchestral tracks, which can be traced... to Philly Joe Jones... Notwithstanding Lion’s reservations, it is good to have the entire April 8 session, especially as it contains additional examples of Morgan and Shorter together... and some fine orchestrations.<sup>916</sup>

On April 13, in between sessions for *Delightfulee Morgan*, Cranshaw recorded for an Oliver Nelson album *Oliver Nelson Plays Michelle*.<sup>917</sup> The album features a large ensemble playing very short versions of a mix of repertoire from sources that range from Duke Ellington, The Beatles, Buck Owens and Nancy Sinatra.<sup>918</sup> The tracks are so short,

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<sup>914</sup> Ibid.

<sup>915</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Lee Morgan, *Delightfulee Morgan* (1966, 2007), CD, Blue Note Records, CDP7-84243-2.

<sup>916</sup> Ibid.

<sup>917</sup> Ibid.

<sup>918</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Oliver Nelson, *Oliver Nelson Plays Michelle* (1966) LP, Impulse Records, A (S) 9113.

in fact, that the album manages to accommodate 11 tracks on a vinyl LP. Nelson states in the notes that this album was the first in three years that he had played on, instead of just writing and conducting.<sup>919</sup> Nelson praised the collective ensemble in the notes, he said:

...thanks to the caliber of the men involved, I think we succeeded. I chose for this date musicians whom I use whenever I can, because in these men I've finally found musicians who can play what I write better than anyone else can.<sup>920</sup>

On May 20 Cranshaw recorded a session for an album co-led by Gary McFarland and Gabor Szabo called *Simpatico*.<sup>921</sup> Cranshaw plays on seven of the album's eleven tracks, the other bassist is Richard Davis.<sup>922</sup> According to the notes, on this album Cranshaw plays electric bass, another case in which TJD does not indicate this, but listening to the album confirms that he does play electric bass.<sup>923</sup> The music on the album cannot really be classified as jazz, and is much more like folk music and or hippie style rock, with whistling and wordless humming. Whatever the music can be called, it is interesting to hear Cranshaw playing in a style so distant from the jazz with which he is normally associated.

On June 14 and 15 Cranshaw recorded a large ensemble project under the leadership of Jimmy Smith, this was Cranshaw's first recording with Smith.<sup>924</sup> The ensemble was arranged and conducted by Oliver Nelson. This album is the first that credits Cranshaw with playing electric bass on record, (according to TJD) though this study has established that he actually recorded on electric bass several times before this

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<sup>919</sup> Ibid.

<sup>920</sup> Ibid.

<sup>921</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>922</sup> Ibid.

<sup>923</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Gary McFarland and Gabor Szabo, *Simpatico*, (1966) LP, Impulse Records, A (S) 9122.

<sup>924</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."



recording.<sup>925</sup> Cranshaw splits the bass duties with Richard Davis, who plays all of the upright parts on the album.<sup>926</sup> Though the notes do not specify who plays bass on which track, the sound of the two instruments is different enough to distinguish between them. An interesting aspect of this album are the vocals that Smith provides on “Boom Boom” and “Hoochie Coochie Man,” both of which feature Cranshaw on bass.

On June 17 Cranshaw was once again teamed with McCoy Tyner and Billy Higgins for a session led by Hank Mobley and featuring Lee Morgan.<sup>927</sup> This was the third album that featured all five members of this group.<sup>928</sup> The session only produced three tracks and remained unissued until 1986, when it was paired with two other unreleased Mobley sessions. The album was eventually titled *Straight No Filter* and the collection received a reissue in 2000.<sup>929</sup> This was the last of the five albums that featured the rhythm section of Tyner, Cranshaw and Higgins. Despite the session yielding only three tracks, the music is spectacular and should be considered essential listening.

On July 1 and July 8 Cranshaw recorded two separate Stanley Turrentine albums, first: *Rough N' Tumble* and second: *Easy Walker*.<sup>930</sup> Both albums feature the same rhythm section of McCoy Tyner, Cranshaw and Mickey Roker, but *Rough N' Tumble* is a large group and *Easy Walker* is a quartet.<sup>931</sup> *Rough N' Tumble* features an octet with arrangements by Duke Pearson, and, it is the first Blue Note album on which Cranshaw

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<sup>925</sup> Ibid.

<sup>926</sup> Ibid.

<sup>927</sup> Ibid.

<sup>928</sup> Ibid.

<sup>929</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Hank Mobley, *Straight No Filter*, (1963, 1965, 1966, 1986, 2000) CD, Blue Note Records, CDP7-84435-2.

<sup>930</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>931</sup> Ibid.

plays electric bass, (though he only plays electric on “Baptismal.”)<sup>932</sup> It was also one of Turrentine’s most successful albums, peaking at number 20 on the Billboard R&B charts on January 6, 1967.<sup>933</sup> *Rough N’ Tumble* was the last of seven recordings that Cranshaw made with guitarist Grant Green.<sup>934</sup>

On *Easy Walker*, Cranshaw is back to playing just acoustic bass and the music is classic Blue Note 60’s straight-ahead jazz. Even on the Burt Bacharach piece “What the World Needs Now” the band swings easily and Cranshaw’s bass line embellishments are particularly excellent. His bass lines on that track are mentioned in the liner notes, Nat Hentoff wrote: “...listen, by the way, to Bob Cranshaw’s bass line throughout.”<sup>935</sup>

Turrentine’s thoughts on the band and the session overall were enthusiastic, he said:

I tell you, with a rhythm section like this one, you don’t have to worry about what it is you have to do... It all just fell into place. I really felt good doing that one. In fact, that’s the way I’d describe the whole session - feeling good.<sup>936</sup>

This was the first time that Cranshaw, Roker and Tyner had reunited since Tyner’s 1963 *Live at Newport* album.<sup>937</sup>

On July 19 Cranshaw recorded a session for Herbie Hancock that featured a nonet playing Hancock originals.<sup>938</sup> Unfortunately, this session is largely unheard, with only one of selections available. “Don’t Even Go There,” was issued as a part of *Herbie*

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<sup>932</sup> Ibid.

<sup>933</sup> Anonymous, “Billboard Chart History: Stanley Turrentine” <https://www.billboard.com/music/stanley-turrentine/chart-history/BLP/song/825271> accessed 2 March 2020.

<sup>934</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>935</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Easy Walker*, (1966) LP, Blue Note Records, BLP4268.

<sup>936</sup> Ibid.

<sup>937</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>938</sup> Ibid.

*Hancock: The Complete Blue Note 1960's Sessions*, all of the other five tracks remain unissued.<sup>939</sup> The one available track is very good and musicians on the album, which includes: Pepper Adams, Stanley Turrentine and Bernard Purdie, make the potential quality of the other songs on the album very intriguing.

On August 15 and 19 Cranshaw recorded his second album with Johnny Hodges, titled *Blue Notes*.<sup>940</sup> The ensemble was an 11-member group of New York veterans with arrangements by Jimmy Jones. Hodges had worked with Jimmy Jones as a pianist on dozens of recordings since 1960 and Hodges had played Jones' arrangements for Ella Fitzgerald as a member of Duke Ellington's orchestra.<sup>941</sup> The notes to *Blue Notes* comment on the effect that the arrangements had on Hodges, they said:

Jimmy Jones has a deservedly high reputation as an arranger, but his work here will undoubtedly win him fresh laurels. Not the least of its merits is the inspiring effect it had on Johnny Hodges.<sup>942</sup>

On August 22 Cranshaw was back supporting Shirley Scott for an album she co- led with Clark Terry, called *Soul Duo*<sup>943</sup> Cranshaw split the bass chair with George Duviver, the rest of the band was the same between both sessions and included: Scott, Terry and Mickey Roker.<sup>944</sup> The album features both Scott and Terry as composers and though the Terry compositions have all been recorded in other settings, *Soul Duo* is the only opportunity to hear any of the compositions on the album by Scott.<sup>945</sup>

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<sup>939</sup> Ibid.

<sup>940</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>941</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Jimmy Jones" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2589&rid=67322> Accessed 2 March 2020.

<sup>942</sup> Stanley Dance, notes to Johnny Hodges, *Blue Notes*, (1966) LP, Verve Records, V6-8680.

<sup>943</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>944</sup> Ibid.

<sup>945</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Shirley Scott" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

On September 22 Cranshaw, Roker and Tyner were once again summoned to back up Stanley Turrentine for an album titled *The Spoiler*.<sup>946</sup> This was the third Turrentine album to feature this rhythm section in 1967 alone.<sup>947</sup> The other two sessions with similar ensembles were recorded on July 28 1967 and January 25 1968.<sup>948</sup> The two later sessions were not issued on *The Spoiler*, but were later issued as part of a Blue Note Compilation titled *The Lost Grooves*.<sup>949</sup> The album is another Duke Pearson/Stanley Turrentine joint venture, which Turrentine described fondly in the liner notes. He said: “Duke and I had a happy collaboration. He seems to know instinctively just what I want him to do; we get the same groove going, and I think it shows in the results.”<sup>950</sup> The groove Turrentine enjoys is certainly also thanks to Cranshaw and the rhythm section that had so much experience together backing Turrentine up. Another experience that helped solidify the rhythm section’s chemistry was the newly formed Duke Pearson big band, of which Cranshaw and Roker were both members.

The Duke Pearson big band would not record until December of 1967,<sup>951</sup> but Bob Blumenthal wrote in the reissue that the band had begun playing together by the time *The Spoiler* was made.<sup>952</sup> Cranshaw’s role is recognized by Feather, who wrote in the notes: “Bob Cranshaw, one of the most flexible and propulsive of modern bassists, plays an important role... as he switches from regular bass to Fender.”<sup>953</sup> The track that Feather is

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<sup>946</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>947</sup> Ibid.

<sup>948</sup> Ibid.

<sup>949</sup> Ibid.

<sup>950</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *The Spoiler*, (1966, 2006) CD, Blue Note Records, CDP7243-8-53359-2.

<sup>951</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>952</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *The Spoiler*.

<sup>953</sup> Ibid.

referring to, on which Cranshaw swaps his upright for electric bass, is “Sonny.” It is striking how frequently Cranshaw was being tapped to play electric bass in 1966.

Ron Carter commented on Cranshaw’s adoption of the electric bass and his development on it.

He was playing electric bass and starting to get real busy because producers understood there's another way to record string bass. Don't hire a guy who plays string bass, hire a guy who plays electric bass. At that time the fender bass was becoming more visible and less problematic to record in the studios than the upright was. All the upright players had to go out and buy electric bass because that was what the job required. The more Bob got a chance to play it, the more he made it sound like an upright feeling. A lot of guys weren't able to transfer the responsibility of the instrument to this “pork chop” It's interesting that he was not known (to producers) as an upright player. That's how I met him. That's how he came to New York. But he got involved in some interesting musical situations that he would tell me occasionally and he became more and more comfortable finally not just the notes on the electric bass, but the note length. There's always guys who played and they always played the notes too long. So, the sound of the west was ill-defined, depending on how long those notes were as they shifted positions. He found a way to make that issue, not an issue. As he played it more and more and upright less and less it, he soon became one of the first call electric bass players of the jazz scene. He was a pretty mild-mannered guy. He understood what it took to be a good bass player. He didn't mind doing what that took.<sup>954</sup>

In October and November of 1966 Cranshaw played on two sessions for a James Moody album titled *James Moody and the Brass Figures*.<sup>955</sup> The album sets Moody's tenor and flute (Moody, who played virtually reed instrument was deliberately limited to just those two for this album) in a five piece brass ensemble with arrangements by Tom McIntosh.<sup>956</sup> On the second of the sessions Moody is heard, without the brass ensemble, in just the quartet of Cranshaw, Mel Lewis and, in his first recording with Cranshaw,

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<sup>954</sup> Ron Carter, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>955</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>956</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to James Moody, *James Moody and the Brass Figures*, (1966, 2004) CD, Milestone Records, MSP9005.

Kenny Barron.<sup>957</sup> Keepnews takes an opportunity to address the quartet segment of the album in the notes. He wrote:

On four numbers Moody's setting is *merely* a rhythm section - but merely is a ridiculous word to use for the full and flawless cushion that Kenny Barron, Bob Cranshaw, and Mel Lewis provide.<sup>958</sup>

The album contains numerous standout performances.

On October 25 Cranshaw recorded a session for a Clifford Jordan album titled *Soul Fountain*.<sup>959</sup> The album was recorded in two sessions, and the single session which Cranshaw played on was split between two bassists, the other being Ben Tucker.<sup>960</sup> Two of the tracks that Tucker played on were also his compositions, ("T.N.T." and "H.N.I.C.")<sup>961</sup> which is a similar situation to the Dexter Gordon album *Clubhouse* on which Tucker played bass on the composition "Devilette," which he contributed to the session.<sup>962</sup> Cranshaw plays both upright on one track, "Caribbean Cruise" and electric bass on the remainder of the session.

In November of 1966 Cranshaw began an association with Norman Granz and his long-running tour series, Jazz at The Philharmonic (JATP). Cranshaw was recommended to Granz by Ray Brown, who had played with JATP from 1950-1966, but in 1966 Brown moved to Los Angeles and stopped touring with JATP.<sup>963</sup> Cranshaw recalled that Brown had told Granz that Cranshaw was a strong player, he said: "...I did the jazz at the Philharmonic. Ray was supposed to do it and Norman Granz called him and said I think

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<sup>957</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>958</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to James Moody, *James Moody and the Brass Figures*.

<sup>959</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>960</sup> Ibid.

<sup>961</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Clifford Jordan, *Soul Fountain*, (1966) CD, Vortex Records, 2010.

<sup>962</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>963</sup> David Chevan, "Raymond Mathews Brown," *Grove Music Online*. 2012; accessed 3 March 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2227876>

we need someone that can hit. And Ray said me.”<sup>964</sup> It was uncommon for Granz to hire young musicians for his JATP tours, as Clark Terry recalled in his autobiography, and Cranshaw was the youngest member of the band on the 1966 JATP tour.<sup>965</sup> In an interview Cranshaw recalled being the youngest member of the band full of so many established stars. He said:

I was the youngest guy at that point in that group with Jazz at the Phil. So, I was kind of silly. I was young... when we'd check into a hotel in England... if you put your shoes out, they would shine them. They had a little hole in the door, and they would put them back... because I was young and just a lot of energy, I used to go and put a black shoe with a brown shoe. I used to mess with the guys. It was Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster and all of them. I used to go and just fuck their shoes up. That, I remember. That was a good time.<sup>966</sup>

Many of the JATP concerts were recorded, some of them on video. It is possible to hear, and in some cases, see Cranshaw's performing in different configurations with an all-star cast of musicians that included: Dizzy Gillespie, James Moody, Clark Terry, Teddy Wilson, Zoot Sims, Benny Carter, Louis Bellson, Coleman Hawkins and T-Bone Walker.<sup>967</sup> One long concert video is available that combines a concert from Royal Festival Hall in London that took place on November 26 featuring a large group of all the musicians without Carter and Hawkins, with a second concert that took place on December 5 at Town Hall in London featuring a smaller group of just the rhythm section with Carter and Hawkins.<sup>968</sup> These performances were also issued as an album on

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<sup>964</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 27 June 2016).

<sup>965</sup> Clark Terry and Gwen Terry, *Clark: The Autobiography of Clark Terry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 161.

<sup>966</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>967</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>968</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

Granz's Pablo label, but that disc lists the concert as being in 1969, which is not accurate.<sup>969</sup>

In between European tours with JATP, Cranshaw returned to New York in late December of 1966 and on December 20 recorded a Coleman Hawkins album titled *Sirius* for Granz's Pablo label.<sup>970</sup> This turned out to be Hawkins' final studio recording, according to Benny Green's liner notes,<sup>971</sup> though Hawkins did continue to perform intermittent concerts, some of which are available on record,<sup>972</sup> until his death in 1969.<sup>973</sup> The album features Cranshaw, Hawkins, Barry Harris and Eddie Locke. Hawkins playing is not at his peak, but as Green says in the notes, his artistry is still important, given Hawkins legacy. He wrote:

To suggest that there is anything on this album to compare with the towering genius of, say, the 1937 "Crazy Rhythm" or the 1945 "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams" would be not only to inflate the pretensions of Hawk's last works, but also debase the... acknowledged...masterpieces. On one hand Hawk is one of those jazz musicians, like Louis Armstrong and Charlie Parker, whose every note is vital if we are to form a complete picture of the man.<sup>974</sup>

Green's point neatly illustrates not only the necessity of this particular Hawkins album, but also restates, and underscores, the purpose of this study. Artists, like Cranshaw, whose work elevates to classic, and essential status, are worthy of a complete

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<sup>969</sup> Benny Green, notes to Various Artists, *JATP in London 1969: JATP All Stars* (1969) LP, Pablo Records, 2610-119.

<sup>970</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>971</sup> Benny Green, notes to Coleman Hawkins, *Sirius*, (1966) LP, Pablo Records 2310-707.

<sup>972</sup> Tom Lord "TJD-Online: Coleman Hawkins" The Jazz Discography Online, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=6398&rid=7051&nav=down>, accessed 3 March 2020.

<sup>973</sup> Lewis Porter, "Coleman Randolph Hawkins," *Grove Music Online*. 2012; accessed 3 March 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.12602>

<sup>974</sup> Benny Green, notes to Coleman Hawkins, *Sirius*.



investigation of their body of work, in order to better understand their individual characteristics.

### **Part IX: 1967-1968**

Cranshaw's work with Norman Granz in 1966 opened many doors for him in the following year. Cranshaw described the sequence of events: "So then I finished that tour, (JATP 1966) (and) after Norman (Granz) saw what I could do with the other guys, then he called me for Ella... he was her manager, He booked Ella..."<sup>975</sup> Cranshaw was hired to be a part of Jimmy Jones trio which was Ella Fitzgerald's touring band. The group was part of a Norman Granz tour in early 1967 that combined Duke Ellington's Orchestra with the Fitzgerald and Jones group for a series of tours. Cranshaw recalled that again, he was the junior member of the group, and, like the earlier JATP tours, he enjoyed getting into similar mischief with the older musicians. He said:

Duke was wonderful. He talked about a lot of music. He was just wonderful to watch. He would write. (I remember) Watching Johnny Hodges and all the guys because when I was with Ella, I was very young. I was like the kid, and they were bringing (me up) ... I was kind of raised with spending time with Johnny Hodges and all the guys who were older, just watching them and laughing, because I used to hide their shoes, too.<sup>976</sup>

The first recording available from this tour is a live Swedish radio broadcast from January 24, 1967. The album, eventually titled *Jazz 'til Midnight*, is split between two separate broadcasts, one by Gonsalvez, one by Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis. The group featuring Cranshaw is under the leadership of Paul Gonsalves, and the group is a mix of Cranshaw, from Fitzgerald's group, Gonsalves, from Ellington's group, Albert Heath, an

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<sup>975</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 27 June 2016).

<sup>976</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

expatriate living in Europe at the time, and Jan Johansson, a native European.<sup>977</sup> The album was issued in 1990 by Storyville records and the quality is excellent. *Jazz 'til Midnight* is a jam session format with long solos, some by Cranshaw and a JATP trademark ballad medley.

There are also live performance recordings available from the 1967 tour that feature the regular ensembles of Ellington and Fitzgerald. One recording, from a January 28 concert in Rotterdam presents the groups as they appeared in concert, with Ellington's band playing a full set before bringing Fitzgerald and her group out to join the orchestra.<sup>978</sup> In an interview with Ethan Iverson Cranshaw described the program of many of the concerts which featured a kind of rotating ensemble. He said:

...when I was with Ella, Duke's band was part of the thing Norman Granz hired. So, Duke would play some cuts. I was with Jimmy Jones and Sam Woodyard as the rhythm section at that point for Ella.<sup>979</sup>

On the recording from January 28 when Fitzgerald joined the ensemble, the orchestra, with Fitzgerald, played the Ellington classic "Cotton Tail," after which Jones' trio took over for Ellington's rhythm section.<sup>980</sup> For the remainder of Fitzgerald's selections, Ellington's orchestra, minus the rhythm section, joins Jones' trio and plays a minimal role in Fitzgerald's arrangements.

Granz's tour with Fitzgerald and Ellington's groups remained active off and on for most of 1967, with concerts in Europe, as well as Carnegie Hall in New York on March 26 and The Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles on June 28, 29 and July 1.<sup>981</sup> The

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<sup>977</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>978</sup> Ibid.

<sup>979</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>980</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>981</sup> Ibid.

domestic concerts have been collected into a Pablo album titled: *The Greatest Jazz Concert in the World*. Cranshaw can be heard backing Fitzgerald on selections from all four of the concert dates. In addition to the prestige of working with Fitzgerald and Ellington's band, Cranshaw also experienced a dramatic change in his income and lifestyle. He recalled: "I was in a place where I was working with Ella. I was making money, so I didn't have to worry about this gig, that gig. It took me to another place..."<sup>982</sup> Cranshaw also remembered getting a call from Duke Ellington to record together after part of the tour. Cranshaw said:

One day Duke called. I was sitting at home and he was recording in the studio. I never heard it. I don't even know what it is we did. I went in the studio. His bass player, I think was John Lamb or somebody, was in Philadelphia because Duke was never off. He never gave the guys time off. They were off and the bass player went to Philly and didn't come back. I went in the studio and Duke had heard me play with Ella, so he knew my playing. I just remember walking in. He gave me some music. It would be like 8 or 12 bars, 24 bars – nothing. Then he might have a bridge written in or so forth. So, one of the things that I've learned through my experience: don't ask any questions. There was nothing written. That means you listen, and you play what you hear. I didn't ask a thing. That was one of the first things: no questions asked. He wanted me to play in those bars, but there was nothing written, so all I could do was listen to what the band was playing and play from that. I didn't ask a thing... But Duke knew; I'm sure he knew that I could hear it, so... but I didn't open my mouth. Mum's the word. I ain't said shit. Just listen to what's happening and play what you hear.<sup>983</sup>

Sadly, besides Cranshaw's recollection of these events, no other record of this session exists anywhere. There is no listing for such a session in Cranshaw's TJD entry and there are no bootlegs circulating of music from the date.

In between tours with Fitzgerald, Cranshaw recorded several albums in New York in 1967. In February he recorded with George Benson for an album titled *Giblet*

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<sup>982</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 30 May 2016).

<sup>983</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

*Gravy*.<sup>984</sup> Cranshaw is on some of the tracks, though there is some discrepancy as to which tracks he plays on. According to the notes Cranshaw is on three tracks, according to TJD he is on five tracks. On the three tracks that are listed in the album notes as Cranshaw, it sounds like he is playing electric bass, but that is not indicated in either the notes or TJD. Complicating things is that the other bassist on the session is Ron Carter, who has a very similar acoustic sound to Cranshaw's. On the tracks that are in dispute, "Sack O' Woe" and "Groovin'" it is difficult to distinguish either Cranshaw or Carter's individual sound because the context is a large ensemble, (which is arranged and conducted by Tom McIntosh.)<sup>985</sup>

On April 20 Cranshaw joined a sextet led by Barry Harris to record an album titled *Luminescence!*.<sup>986</sup> The album was Harris' first date as a leader on Prestige and he arranged all of the music on the session, which included four Harris originals.<sup>987</sup> Harris' arrangements are unique and allow the frontline of Pepper Adams, Slide Hampton and Junior Cook equal focus. In the notes Gitler recognized the rhythm section of Cranshaw and Lenny McBrowne for their support throughout. He wrote:

The solid support of the rhythm team of Bob Cranshaw and Lenny McBrowne, quite obvious from the opening bars of "Luminescence," but most pronounced behind Barry's solo, is a great aid throughout all the tracks.<sup>988</sup>

On June 23 Cranshaw recorded for the first time with Houston Person for his album *Chocomotive*.<sup>989</sup> The album also features Cedar Walton, Alan Dawson (on

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<sup>984</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>985</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>986</sup> Ibid.

<sup>987</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Barry Harris, *Luminescence!*, (1967) LP, Prestige Records, PR 7498.

<sup>988</sup> Ibid.

<sup>989</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

vibraphone, not drums) and drummer Frankie Jones.<sup>990</sup> Walton contributed two originals, the title track, “Chocomotive” and “Close Quarters.”<sup>991</sup> On the title track Cranshaw plays an unaccompanied bass solo and it sounds like he may have switched to using steel strings by this time. The sound on the album<sup>4</sup> is much more percussive than Cranshaw’s sound on other records. This may be due to the recording techniques used on *Chocomotive*. The album was recorded at Englewood Cliffs by engineer Rudy Van Gelder but is issued on Prestige records, and on the previous Prestige album Cranshaw recorded, Barry Harris’ *Luminescence!*, the notes make mention of using new recording techniques. They say:

In recent years many advances have been made in recorded sound, but for some strange reason jazz recording techniques have remained static since the 50’s. With this album (*Luminescence!*) producer Don Schlitten begins a series of collaborations with Richard Alderson which they feel will remedy the situation.<sup>992</sup>

It is unclear what exactly is meant by that statement, but the sound of Cranshaw’s bass is markedly different on Person’s *Chocomotive* album.

On June 23 and July 28 Cranshaw was back recording with Stanley Turrentine for Blue Note records.<sup>993</sup> The music was again arranged by Duke Pearson with an 11 piece group on the first session and 9 on the second session.<sup>994</sup> The music was not released when it was recorded, it was first issued partially as a part of a 1975 album *New Time Shuffle*, then both sessions were issued on a 2008 album titled *Return of the Prodigal Son*.<sup>995</sup> Neither the listing on TJD nor the liner notes to the 2008 issue mention whether

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<sup>990</sup> Ibid.

<sup>991</sup> Ibid.

<sup>992</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Barry Harris, *Luminescence!*.

<sup>993</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>994</sup> Ibid.

<sup>995</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw plays upright, electric or both, the notes to the 1975 say in reference to the track “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”: “note also the strong support offered by Bob Cranshaw, whose bass is presumably a Fender.”<sup>996</sup> Cranshaw does, in fact, play both basses, and the sound of the upright is restored to his normal sound. Another interesting characteristic of the second session is Duke Pearson, who plays organ in addition to McCoy Tyner’s piano on both takes of “Dr. Feelgood.”<sup>997</sup>

On July 2 1967 Cranshaw was at the Newport Jazz festival, playing with Billy Taylor’s trio backing up an all-star “Vibes Workout” that featured: Bobby Hutcherson, Gary Burton, Red Norvo, Milt Jackson and Lionel Hampton.<sup>998</sup> Some other musicians also sat in during the program including: Steve Swallow and Roy Haynes.<sup>999</sup> The Newport Festival performance of the “Vibes Workout” was not recorded. In a separate live performance, (presumably also from the Newport Festival, though there is no record of that group playing at the festival) Cranshaw recorded two live tracks with Lionel Hampton playing electric bass, which was the first time Cranshaw had recorded with Lionel Hampton.<sup>1000</sup> These two tracks from Newport were later paired with a separate session from New York, recorded in 1973, which Cranshaw also played on, and issued on a 1986 album titled: *Hamp’s Blues*.<sup>1001</sup>

On August 18 Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder’s studio to record with Sonny Criss for Prestige Records, titled *Up, Up and Away*.<sup>1002</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with

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<sup>996</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *New Time Shuffle*, (1975) LP, Blue Note Records, LT-993.

<sup>997</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>998</sup> Burt Goldblatt, *Newport Jazz Festival: The Illustrated History*, 272.

<sup>999</sup> Ibid, 272.

<sup>1000</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1001</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1002</sup> Ibid.

Criss since 1959's *At The Crossroads*.<sup>1003</sup> Cranshaw had recorded with the other members of the rhythm section, Cedar Walton and Lennie McBrowne, on separate Prestige albums just months earlier in 1967. The final member of the group is Tal Farlow, *Up, Up and Away* is the only time that Cranshaw recorded with Farlow.<sup>1004</sup> The rhythm section gets a somewhat backhanded mention in the liner notes, which say: "On 'Scrapple From The Apple' the rhythm section jells totally and they rush the time in a correct (for jazz) and exhilarating way."<sup>1005</sup> This album does not share the bass sound issue from *Chocomotive*, though, the sound is not as good on any of the late 60's Prestige records as Blue Note records from the same period.

On August 21, 22 and 23 Cranshaw recorded three sessions for a Harold Vick album called *Watch What Happens*.<sup>1006</sup><sup>1007</sup> The album features a large ensemble with a vocal group added on several tracks. The arrangements were done by Ed Bland, (who has only four albums listed to his credit on TJD) and the tracks with vocal group are not particularly effective, which is unfortunate because the rest of the band is excellent.<sup>1008</sup> On the other hand, some of the tracks feature Vick alone with the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Herbie Hancock and Grady Tate, and these tracks are outstanding. Two of them, "Ode to Trane" and "If Ever I Would Leave You." are singled out in the liner notes as highlights.<sup>1009</sup>

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<sup>1003</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1004</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1005</sup> Raven Screen, notes to Sonny Criss, *Up, Up and Away*, (1967) Prestige Records, PR7530.

<sup>1006</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1007</sup> In the TJD entry for these sessions the album is incorrectly titled as *The Melody is Here*, which is the opening statement liner notes on the back cover of the album.

<sup>1008</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Ed Bland" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=74900> Accessed 4 March 2020.

<sup>1009</sup> Dom Cerulli, notes to Harold Vick, *Watch What Happens*, (1967) LP, RCA Victor, LPM3902.

On September 22 Cranshaw recorded a session led by pianist Jack Wilson for a Blue Note album titled *Easterly Winds*.<sup>1010</sup> This was Cranshaw's first time recording with Wilson, but the two had played extensively in Chicago, as Wilson explained in the notes. He said:

Bob and I go back to Chicago. We used to work a lot when he was with the M.J.T. Plus Three and I was with Dinah (Washington). We always used to pick Walter Perkins and Bob to work with us.<sup>1011</sup>

*Easterly Winds* is a purely straight-ahead session, no large ensembles, no vocal groups and the only commercial consideration is the inclusion of the boogaloo "Do It." The album is an excellent opportunity to hear Cranshaw with Wilson, Billy Higgins, Jackie McLean, and Lee Morgan playing late hard bop.

On October 9 Cranshaw recorded another Hank Mobley session for Blue Note, an album titled *Hi Voltage*. This album again featured Billy Higgins on drums, as well as Blue Mitchell, Jackie McLean and John Hicks.<sup>1012</sup> The ensemble was similar to *A Caddy for Daddy*, which Leonard Feather mentions in the notes. He wrote:

Bob Cranshaw and Billy Higgins, of course, are too familiar to need any detailed introduction, particularly since they both contributed so valuably to Hank's highly successful album *A Caddy for Daddy*.<sup>1013</sup>

Cranshaw also received a nod from Feather, who wrote: "Notice, too, incidentally, that Bob Cranshaw does a lot more than merely walk his way through the proceedings."<sup>1014</sup> *Hi*

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<sup>1010</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1011</sup> Leroy Robinson, notes to Jack Wilson, *Easterly Winds*, (1967) LP, Blue Note Records, BST84288.

<sup>1012</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1013</sup> Leonard Feather and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Hank Mobley, *Hi Voltage*, (1967, 2004) CD, Blue Note Records, CDP7-84273-2.

<sup>1014</sup> *Ibid.*



*Voltage* was Cranshaw's first time recording with John Hicks, and his last time recording with Jackie McLean.<sup>1015</sup>

In December (probably December 14)<sup>1016</sup> of 1967 Cranshaw recorded his second album with pianist Monty Alexander and Al Foster for Alexander's album called *Zing!*. Cranshaw recorded half of the album, the other bassist was Victor Gaskin.<sup>1017</sup> Cranshaw had met Alexander as early as 1964 at the Playboy Club in New York and the two worked frequently together at Jilly's,<sup>1018</sup> The Playboy Club and other clubs. Guitarist Al Gafa recalled meeting Cranshaw at the Playboy Club when the two worked with Alexander. He wrote:

My first jazz gig was at the Playboy Club in New York. It is there that I became part of the Monty Alexander trio with Bob Cranshaw on bass. That's where I met Bob and the year was 1965. He and I worked together many times over the years...<sup>1019</sup>

Cranshaw's next recording was on December 15, with Duke Pearson's big band.<sup>1020</sup> The band was an all-star cast of New York musicians and has been compared to The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, which not only formed the same year as Pearson's big band (February 1967 for Pearson's band)<sup>1021</sup> but also had some members in common, including Jerry Dodgion, Pepper Adams and Garnett Brown.<sup>1022</sup> In an interview with Ethan Iverson Cranshaw also compared the Duke Pearson big band to the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, he said:

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<sup>1015</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1016</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1017</sup> Mort Fega, notes to Monty Alexander, *Zing!*, (1967) LP, RCA Victor, LPM-3930.

<sup>1018</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1019</sup> Al Gafa, personal correspondence, 1 February 2020.

<sup>1020</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1021</sup> Alan Grant, notes to Duke Pearson, *Introducing the Duke Pearson Big Band*, (1967) LP, Blue Note Records, BST84276.

<sup>1022</sup> Ibid.

BC: Yeah. We played, like Thad Jones, but we played at the Half Note.

EI: Every Monday or something?

BC: Yeah. It was kind of that scene. Maybe a year or a few months. I remember taking Ella Fitzgerald. I was working with Ella for years. I brought Ella down to hear the band and she had a ball.<sup>1023</sup>

The rhythm section was Pearson, Cranshaw and Roker, but Pearson would regularly leave the bandstand to talk to women. With just Cranshaw and Roker to drive a big band the two became even tighter together. Cranshaw described this, he said:

Mickey and I just locked down. We were the lock... we started to play with Duke Pearson's big band. Duke would never play. He was entertaining girls and stuff like that, and the band is playing. We were into the music; he was into the ladies. So, there was no piano player. It gave me and Mickey a chance to get tighter because we had it with the band. It was a learning experience, a great learning experience, for me at that time. Mickey and I, we became tight.<sup>1024</sup>

In a 1968 article in *Jazz Journal*, Mark Gardner noted how infrequently Pearson played during the band's live performances. He wrote:

While Duke does play piano on the band's LP, he rarely touches the keyboard when the outfit are playing for an audience. He believes that a leader should be amongst his men, directing the performance (on the crowded bandstand at the Half Note he stands literally in the centre of the band)... this absence of piano chords places a heavy burden on the rhythm section but with strong men like Cranshaw and Roker laying down a relentless pulse, a rock solid foundation is assured.<sup>1025</sup>

Pianist Mike LeDonne worked extensively with Cranshaw and Roker and reflected on their chemistry.

Those two guys, the way they swung together, you'd never find that again. Never. They were one of the top bass and drum teams of all time. Right up there with Philly Joe and Paul Chambers, Jimmy Cobb and Sam Jones or Tony Williams and Ron Carter. They're up there. One of the most unbeatable rhythm teams you could ever imagine playing with. I don't know

<sup>1023</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1024</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1025</sup> Mark Gardner, "The Duke Pearson Big Band" *Jazz Journal*, July 1968, Vol. 21, No. 7, 12.

about those other guys, but I can say in Bob and Mickey's case, they truly loved each other like brothers. They were as tight as two human beings could be. And it showed. Bob used to tell me that the reason for their success was because they respected and loved each other so much on the bandstand that if Mickey started to rush, which he would do sometimes, you could feel his high hat picking up just a little, Bob would look over and shout "Roker!" And Mickey would look at Bob, and the look on Mickey's face would always be like some kid who just got caught with his hand in the cookie jar. And then he would realize, and he would slow down and go with Bob. If Bob was doing something wrong, Mickey would yell at him "Cranshaw!" They had this ability to fix each other's little variances on the fly, on the bandstand, without any animosity, no ego. Not controlling at all. They believed "You wouldn't be saying this to me if it wasn't absolutely true." That's the kind of love and respect they had for each other. And that's why they played their asses off together. You listen to any record they're on. They never sound anything but spectacular.<sup>1026</sup>

The band remained together, playing regularly at the Half Note, La Martinique, the Dom, and Club Ruby,<sup>1027</sup> recorded two albums and one live album from Baltimore in 1969.<sup>1028</sup>

The album was recorded in one session, but the number of takes is very high, the lowest number of takes is six for "Ready When You Are C.B." and the highest is 54 for "Time After Time."<sup>1029</sup>

On December 22 Cranshaw recorded a session for an album called *We're Goin' Up* on Prestige Records under the leadership of a 19 year old Eric Kloss.<sup>1030</sup> Kloss, who was a college freshman at the time of the recording,<sup>1031</sup> enlisted a group of New York professionals for his album including Cranshaw, Kenny Barron, Alan Dawson and Jimmy Owens.<sup>1032</sup> Cranshaw has a walking solo on "I Long to Belong to You" and because the

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<sup>1026</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>1027</sup> Alan Grant, notes to Duke Pearson, *Introducing the Duke Pearson Big Band*.

<sup>1028</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1029</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1030</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Eric Kloss, *We're Goin' Up*, (1967) LP, Prestige Records, PR7565.

<sup>1031</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1032</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

album is on late 60's Prestige, the sound of Cranshaw's bass is again quite different from the sound on other record labels. On *We're Goin' Up* Cranshaw was singled out in the notes as: "...a rock steady bassist... he is a player who fits in any context and his firm bottom is the best kind of building block."<sup>1033</sup>

Cranshaw played on an album led by trumpeters Burt Collins and Joe Shepley titled *Time, Space and The Blues*, recorded in 1968 on an unspecified date.<sup>1034</sup> Shepley and Collins were both trumpet players in Duke Pearson's big band and the ensemble on *Time, Space and The Blues* features several other members of Pearson's big band including: Cranshaw, Mickey Roker, Jerry Dodgion and Garnett Brown.<sup>1035</sup> The rest of the ensemble includes tuba, French horn and bass trombone with composition by Shepley, Michael Abene and John Carisi and arrangements by Michael Abene.<sup>1036</sup>

On January 12, 1968, Cranshaw recorded another Sonny Criss album, called *The Beat Goes On*, for Prestige records at Van Gelder studios.<sup>1037</sup> The rhythm section on *The Beat Goes On* is Cranshaw, Cedar Walton and Alan Dawson which is identical to the previous Sonny Criss album *Up, Up and Away!* with Dawson in place of Lennie McBrowne and Tal Farlow's guitar is also gone.<sup>1038</sup> The album is a relaxed straight-ahead bebop quartet playing standards and popular songs (including Sonny Bono's "The Beat Goes On.")<sup>1039</sup> The notes describe the band's chemistry, they say: "Cedar and Bob fit

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<sup>1033</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Eric Kloss, *We're Goin' Up*.

<sup>1034</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1035</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1036</sup> Bob Thompson, notes to Collins/Shepley Galaxy, *Time, Space and The Blues*, (1968) LP, MTA Records, NWS 2.

<sup>1037</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1038</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1039</sup> Mark Gardner, notes to Sonny Criss, *The Beat Goes On*, (1968) LP, Prestige Records, PR7558.

perfectly with Sonny and Alan. In other words, this is a genuine quartet - four playing as one - even though they don't regularly work together."<sup>1040</sup>

On January 19 Cranshaw recorded another Blue Note session with Hank Mobley for his album *Reach Out!*, this was Cranshaw's last session with Hank Mobley.<sup>1041</sup> The ensemble included George Benson, Woody Shaw, Billy Higgins and pianist Lamont Johnson.<sup>1042</sup> The title track, "Reach Out, I'll Be There" was made famous by the Four Tops and Mobley's ensemble sounds uncomfortable either with the song or with each other. The album also includes three Mobley originals,<sup>1043</sup> two of which, "Good Pickins" and "Lookin' East" have never been recorded on any other albums.<sup>1044</sup> In either case "Reach Out, I'll Be There" is not together, but the rest of the album is classic Blue Note with Cranshaw and Higgins and an all-star front line.

On February 23 Cranshaw recorded a session with Horace Silver for his Blue Note album, *Serenade to a Soul Sister*.<sup>1045</sup> This album was a departure for Silver in a variety of ways, as the notes to the reissue put it: "*Serenade to a Soul Sister*...found Silver opening himself and his music to change on a variety of levels."<sup>1046</sup> The first was the inclusion of Cranshaw on electric bass, which was the first time Silver recorded with electric bass.<sup>1047</sup> Interestingly, Bob Cranshaw is, according to TJD, the only bassist credited with playing electric bass on Horace Silver recordings, which he did eight

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<sup>1040</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1041</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1042</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1043</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Hank Mobley, *Reach Out!*, (1968) LP, Blue Note Records, BST 84288.

<sup>1044</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1045</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1046</sup> Horace Silver and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Horace Silver, *Serenade to a Soul Sister*, (1968, 2003) CD, Blue Note Records, BN-LA402-H2.

<sup>1047</sup> Tom Lord "TJD-Online: Horace Silver" The Jazz Discography Online, <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2610>, accessed 5 March 2020.

times.<sup>1048</sup> *Serenade to a Soul Sister* was also the first time that Silver wrote lyrics to his compositions, though the lyrics were not recorded, they were included in Silver's liner notes on the original release.<sup>1049</sup> This album was also the first of several albums on which Silver used studio musicians, rather than his touring ensemble.<sup>1050</sup> Silver called out both Cranshaw and Roker for their ability to learn and execute his music. He said:

Bob Cranshaw, who I call Mr. Instant Copp - because he not only plays so well but learns so fast and was a great asset to the date. Mickey Roker might also be called Mr. Instant Copp because he catches on so fast and gives you just what you want.<sup>1051</sup>

On March 12 Cranshaw recorded another Prestige session led by Houston Person at Van Gelder Studios for his album *Blue Odyssey*.<sup>1052</sup> The rhythm section was Cranshaw, Cedar Walton and Frankie Jones, the same trio that backed Person on *Chocomotive*.<sup>1053</sup> The rest of the ensemble for *Blue Odyssey* was Curtis Fuller and Pepper Adams.<sup>1054</sup> Cranshaw and Walton had become the de facto house band for Prestige during the late 1960's and their chemistry was evident on these sides. Cranshaw's bass sound steadily improved on these later Prestige albums, which had such poor bass sound in the beginning. Cranshaw's sound is mentioned in the notes to *Blue Odyssey*, they say:

And talking of sound, Bob Cranshaw is possessed of what Michael Morgan, in his notes for *Chocomotive*, accurately described as a "boss sound." Whether punching out an irresistible bass line for the Pearson band to swing over or indulging in more intricate and subtle flights with and of a dozen New York small groups. Bob is a master of the situation. No wonder Person says, "Bob has always been one of my favorite bassists."<sup>1055</sup>

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<sup>1048</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1049</sup> Horace Silver and Bob Blumenthal, notes to Horace Silver, *Serenade to a Soul Sister*.

<sup>1050</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1051</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1052</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1053</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1054</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1055</sup> Mark Gardner, notes to Houston Person, *Blue Odyssey*, (1968) LP, Prestige Records, PR 7566.

On March 21 Cranshaw recorded a session at Van Gelder studios, led by Frank Foster for his Blue Note album *Manhattan Fever*.<sup>1056</sup> Cranshaw had recorded with Foster before when they were both sidemen in bands with Quincy Jones, Dave Grusin and Duke Pearson, this was the first session led by Foster.<sup>1057</sup> The rhythm section of Cranshaw and Mickey Roker were joined by Richard Wyands, his first time recording with Cranshaw.<sup>1058</sup> The liner notes, by Duke Pearson, mention the perennial favorite combination of Cranshaw and Roker. He wrote: “Cranshaw and Roker are a team whose support has been responsible for many successful Blue Note recordings.”<sup>1059</sup> Pearson also singled out Cranshaw’s individual contributions, he wrote: “Though Cranshaw doesn’t care much for the spotlight. It’s evident that he’s more than capable on ‘Bill.’ Also behold the opening of ‘Stampede’”.<sup>1060</sup>

On April 23 and 24 Cranshaw recorded two sessions for a Yusef Lateef album titled *The Blue Lateef* on Atlantic Records.<sup>1061</sup> The ensemble is a ten piece ensemble plus string quartet and a vocal group.<sup>1062</sup> The group features Lateef playing a wide range of instruments with a diverse ensemble of backing instruments including harmonica.<sup>1063</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the album, in some cases in addition to an upright bass played by Cecil McBee.<sup>1064</sup> All but one composition were written by Lateef, and all of the

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<sup>1056</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1057</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1058</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1059</sup> Duke Pearson and Michael Cuscuna, notes to Frank Foster, *Manhattan Fever*, (1968, 2007) CD, Blue Note Records 3-85191-2.

<sup>1060</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1061</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1062</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1063</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1064</sup> Ibid.

arrangements are by Lateef.<sup>1065</sup> Lateef's compositions draw from influences of Mississippi prison songs, Baroque music, Medieval Plainchant, Philippine Tagalog Chant and Taiwanese Koto.<sup>1066</sup>

On May 10 Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder studios to record with Stanley Turrentine, Shirley Scott, Jimmy Ponder and Ray Lucas.<sup>1067</sup> This session was not particularly successful, only one track was issued "Ain't No Way" on a 1981 album of the same title.<sup>1068</sup> "Ain't No Way" was also included on a CD reissue of another Turrentine album, 1968's *Common Touch*.<sup>1069</sup> Two other tracks from the same session remain unissued.<sup>1070</sup> Cranshaw plays both upright and electric bass on these tracks.<sup>1071</sup>

On June 17 Cranshaw recorded a session led by Milt Jackson for his Verve album *Milt Jackson and the Hip String Quartet*.<sup>1072</sup> This album paired Jackson as the primary solo voice above a non-traditional string quartet with just one violin, one viola and two cellos, one of which is tuned an octave higher than normal, with arrangements by Tom McIntosh.<sup>1073</sup> With Cranshaw in the rhythm section are Mickey Roker and Cedar Walton, this was the first time they had played together as a unit.<sup>1074</sup> Cranshaw plays on five of the album's eight tracks, the other rhythm section is Ron Carter and Grady Tate.<sup>1075</sup>

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<sup>1065</sup> Yusef Lateef, notes to Yusef Lateef, *The Blue Yusef Lateef*, (1968, 2004) CD, Atlantic Records, SD 1548.

<sup>1066</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1067</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1068</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Ain't No Way*, (1968, 1981) LP, Blue Notes Records, LT-1095.

<sup>1069</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1070</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1071</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1072</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1073</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Milt Jackson, *Milt Jackson and the Hip String Quartet*, (1968) LP, Verve Records, V6-8761.

<sup>1074</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1075</sup> Ira Gitler, notes to Milt Jackson, *Milt Jackson and the Hip String Quartet*.



On June 24 and September 11 Cranshaw recorded two sessions for Duke Pearson's Blue Note album *The Phantom*.<sup>1076</sup> Pearson originally wrote the music for *The Phantom* as a score for a television program called *Still a Brother: Inside the Negro Middle Class*, but the piece "The Phantom" was not used for the program and became the impetus for the album of the same name.<sup>1077</sup> Pearson is again very complimentary of Cranshaw and Roker in the notes, he said: "I'd like to call particular attention to the superb accompaniment by Bob Cranshaw and Mickey Roker, but then, they were superb throughout the entire album."<sup>1078</sup> Pearson also gave Cranshaw additional praise, he told Hentoff:

As for Bob Cranshaw Duke refers to him as "my left hand... I've never done something instantaneously without Cranshaw being right there with me. I didn't have to telegraph what I was going to do: he somehow just knew it. In 'Bunda Amerela' (sic) for instance, I go into a quote from 'The Saber Dance.' I didn't know I was about to play it, but there he was."<sup>1079</sup>

On December 2 and 3 Cranshaw recorded with Duke Pearson's big band at Van Gelder studio.<sup>1080</sup> The session on December 2 recorded four tracks, but none were issued, the December 3 session resulted in the tracks that were issued as *Now Hear This!*<sup>1081</sup> *Now Hear This!* added vocalist Andy Bey to the band for the track "I'm Tired of Cryin' Over You," on which Cranshaw switches to electric bass<sup>1082</sup> *Now Hear This!*, also includes an arrangement from Frank Foster, his original composition "Dissapproachment."

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<sup>1076</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1077</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Duke Pearson, *The Phantom*, (1968) LP, Blue Note Records, BST 84293.

<sup>1078</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1079</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1080</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1081</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1082</sup> Ibid.

On June 24 and 28 Cranshaw recorded with his regular collaborator Grady Tate, for his debut album *Windmills of My Mind*, but this time Tate was not playing drums, he was singing.<sup>1083</sup> According to the notes, Tate never sought out to be a drummer and had always planned to be a singer and an actor.<sup>1084</sup> Cranshaw is only on two tracks, swapping the bass chair with Chuck Rainey, on Cranshaw's tracks he is joined in the rhythm section by Herbie Hancock and Bobby Thomas.<sup>1085</sup> Cranshaw and Thomas had been working together in various contexts, Cranshaw said: "Bobby Thomas... We worked with Billy together, and then we did the David Frost TV show together..."<sup>1086</sup>

On July 2 Cranshaw recorded his final album with Sonny Criss, *Rockin' In Rhythm*, with pianist Eddie Green and Alan Dawson. This third in the series of late 60's Criss albums on Prestige is like the others, a straight-ahead date with no frills. The selections are a mix of the great American songbook, jazz standards and one Beatles song, "Elanor Rigby." According to the notes "Elanor Rigby" was supposed to have been recorded on the prior *Up, Up and Away!* session, but Criss needed extra time to arrange it for the group.<sup>1087</sup>

Cranshaw's next recording was on August 13 under the leadership of Eric Kloss for his second Prestige album, *Sky Shadows*.<sup>1088</sup> The music and ensemble are a substantial departure from his previous recording that Cranshaw played on, which was essentially a bebop session, and *Sky Shadows* contains much more adventurous music. The ensemble

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<sup>1083</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1084</sup> Gary McFarland, notes to Grady Tate, *Windmills of My Mind*, (1968) LP, Skye Records, SK4D.

<sup>1085</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1086</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1087</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Sonny Criss, *Rockin' In Rhythm*, (1968) LP, Prestige Records, PR7610.

<sup>1088</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

of Cranshaw, Pat Martino, Jaki Byard, and Jack DeJohnette are especially brilliant on Pat Martino's composition "Sky Shadows," normally in 6/4 but played in 7/4 on this recording.<sup>1089</sup> Each member of the band solos on "Sky Shadows," including a free, unaccompanied solo by Cranshaw. This was Cranshaw's first recording with both Pat Martino and Jack DeJohnette.<sup>1090</sup>

On August 30 Cranshaw returned to Van Gelder studio with a nearly identical ensemble led by Stanley Turrentine that had recorded together on May 10.<sup>1091</sup> The ensemble included Cranshaw, Turrentine, Shirley Scott, Jimmy Ponder and Leo Morris (Idris Muhammed) in place of Ray Lucas.<sup>1092</sup> The August 30 session was much more successful than the May 10 session and yielded enough tracks for the album *Common Touch*. Cranshaw plays electric bass throughout the entire album. Interestingly, Bob Dylan composition "Blowin' in the Wind," was recorded on *Common Touch*, as well as on Scott's album *Soul Song*, just three months later, with essentially the same band (Ray Lucas back in place of Idris Muhammad on *Soul Song*) and given essentially the same treatment on both recordings.

On October 1, 14 and 28 Cranshaw recorded three sessions with a large ensemble backing Stanley Turrentine for his Blue Note album *Always Something There*.<sup>1093</sup> The album is called, quite plainly in the notes a "commercial album."<sup>1094</sup> The notes continue: "...the tracks are short... Many of the tunes are recent hits appropriated from the world of

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<sup>1089</sup> Michael Cuscuna, notes to Eric Kloss, *Sky Shadows*, (1968) LP, Prestige Records PR7594.

<sup>1090</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1091</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1092</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1093</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1094</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Always Something There*, (1968) LP, Blue Note Records, BST 84298.

pop. However, such a classification might tend to some compromising of artistic principles.”<sup>1095</sup> One of the redeeming qualities of *Always Something There* are the arrangements, which are written by Thad Jones.<sup>1096</sup> Also redeeming is the membership of the ensemble which includes, among others: Herbie Hancock, Hank Jones, Mel Lewis, Mickey Rocker and Kenny Burrell.<sup>1097</sup> Turrentine described that band in the notes, he said: “This was a really superb band made up of the most talented and versatile men in town. I think this is one of the best albums I’ve ever done.”<sup>1098</sup> A standout track is the Thad Jones original composition “Hometown,” which is first heard on this album.

In November of 1968 Cranshaw recorded what was to be pianist Bobby Timmons’ final album called *Do You Know The Way?*<sup>1099</sup> According to the notes in the 2001 reissue, the album was recorded in two sessions, though TJD only shows one session.<sup>1100</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Timmons since the 1960 Vee Jay album *The Young Lions*.<sup>1101</sup> There are three Timmons compositions on the album, two of which, “The Spanish Count,”<sup>1102</sup> and “Come Together”<sup>1103</sup> can only be heard on *Do You Know The Way?*.

On November 6 Cranshaw recorded a session led by Shirley Scott for her Atlantic album called *Soul Song*.<sup>1104</sup> The album is made up of four sessions, but Cranshaw played

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<sup>1095</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1096</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1097</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1098</sup> Leonard Feather, notes to Stanley Turrentine, *Always Something There*.

<sup>1099</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1100</sup> Peter Keepnews and Mitchell Feldman, notes to Bobby Timmons, *Quartets and Orchestra*, (2001) CD, Milestone Records, MCD-47091-2.

<sup>1101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1102</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: The Spanish Count” *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=304094&rid=140892> Accessed 5 March 2020.

<sup>1103</sup> Lord, Tom. “TJD-Online: Come Together” *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=3941&rid=140892> Accessed 5 March 2020.

<sup>1104</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

on just one, which only resulted in two songs used for the album.<sup>1105</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on both selections, “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “Mr. Businessman.” The arrangement of “Blowin’ in the Wind” is nearly identical to the version recorded by Turrentine just three months earlier. One of the two unreleased selections is a Scott original, “My Cup Runneth Over,” which is the only version ever recorded.<sup>1106</sup>

On November 19 Cranshaw played on one session for the George Benson Verve album *Goodies*.<sup>1107</sup> The album features Benson playing and singing with a large ensemble, Cranshaw plays electric bass on three tracks. All three tracks on *Goodies* display some of Cranshaw’s best electric playing on any recording to this point. “That Lucky Old Sun” and “Windmills of my Mind” showcase Cranshaw’s ability to play funky, R&B style bass.

#### **Part X: 1969 - 1974**

In 1969 Cranshaw began an association that would, in many ways, change his life. He began working for the new PBS television show, *Sesame Street*.<sup>1108</sup> Cranshaw got involved with *Sesame Street* through pianist Joe Raposo, who Cranshaw had met in 1968 while playing an off-Broadway show called *House of Flowers*.<sup>1109</sup> Cranshaw related the beginning of their relationship to Michael Woods in a 1995 interview. He said:

I fell into the job through Chuck Israels, another bass player who was in New York. And Chuck was doing an off- Broadway show called *House of Flowers*, and he was leaving, going to the state of Washington to teach at a university there. So, he called me and asked me if I was interested... they were having a lot of problems... with the rhythm section. They were all arguing all the time with each other ‘cause I guess they were not getting a good feeling from the music. And the conga player didn’t like the bass

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<sup>1105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1108</sup> David Meeker, “Bob Cranshaw” *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1109</sup> Michael Woods, “Fillius Jazz Archive: Interview with Bob Cranshaw”

player, and this one. So, I went in and I listened to the show... before Chuck left. And I could hear the chaos. I knew what was happening. Some of it was personalities. Some of it was musicianship. But I heard it. And the next day I went in to play the show and it felt so good. We had so much fun.<sup>1110</sup>

Though Cranshaw enjoyed playing with Raposo and the group, he did have to make adjustments to his playing style to accommodate Raposo's style. Cranshaw described his approach to playing with Raposo:

Joe Raposo... played piano a lot different than piano players that I was accustomed to playing with. Because I was playing with Hank Jones and Jimmy Jones and all of these great people. Not that Joe was not great, it was just a different sound. He didn't comp. He played everything. He played the bass in his left hand, so I heard what was happening and I said "Okay, this is the way." I've always accepted the way another person plays... I try to blend what I do with what they're doing. I heard the way Joe heard... And I became his left hand. So, he knew that I was there, regardless to what he played, I was right on top of him... I didn't want him to have to change anything he was doing. I could adapt what I was doing. What I did was take his left hand and just make it feel good to him... So this is kind of how my whole thing, how I evolved with Joe Raposo. We just locked. And from that time until his death, everything that Joe Raposo, all of his ventures, whether it was a Broadway show, movies, I was always involved. Because he never had to worry about what he did. I never disturbed his thing. I just made his thing feel good. And I know I did. So, I had an accomplishment.<sup>1111</sup>

Cranshaw's ability and willingness to adapt to Raposo's style led to many years of working together. *Sesame Street* alone was nearly three decades, but Cranshaw also worked with Raposo on other projects for the Children's Television Workshop, including: *3,2,1 Contact* and *The Electric Company*, the 1972 film *Savages*,<sup>1112</sup> and *The Skitch Henderson Show*.<sup>1113</sup>

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<sup>1110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1112</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1113</sup> Anonymous, "The Skitch Henderson Show", [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1863070/fullcredits?ref\\_=tt\\_cl\\_sm#cast](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1863070/fullcredits?ref_=tt_cl_sm#cast), accessed 24 March 2020.

Jon Stone, one of the original *Sesame Street* cast members praised Raposo's ability and contributions to the show in an interview for Michael Davis. He said: "Joe was many things, He was a singularly gifted composer and songwriter, and a remarkable facile pianist."<sup>1114</sup> But he also remembered that Raposo was inclined to rush his writing and the recording of music for the show. Stone said:

He was a lazy last-minute worker who often would be scribbling arrangements on scraps of old envelopes as he taxied to a recording session... Joe hated editing. If he didn't get it right the first time, it would stay unright. I often pleaded with him that with just the slightest additional effort, significant improvements could be made, but Joe was always in a rush to get on to the next challenge. Redoubtable Joe was the most talented, infuriating, charming, lazy, prolific, unpredictable genius I had the happy fortune to work with.<sup>1115</sup>

The band for *Sesame Street* was usually a seven piece group that included: keyboards, guitar, bass, drums, trumpet, woodwind with doubles, and mallet percussion.<sup>1116</sup> The theme song for the show also included a harmonica, played by Toots Thielmans.<sup>1117</sup> The session for the theme lasted 90 minutes, including the rehearsal.<sup>1118</sup> Jon Stone described a typical session with Raposo in an interview with Michael Davis, he said:

A recording session with Joe was an on-the-fly, off-the-cuff experience... He would circle the room addressing each of the musicians in turn, saying to Bobby (sic) Cranshaw, the bass player "Give me a kind of 'boom-ticky-sha, boom-ticky-sha'." Then to Jimmy Mitchell on guitar, "Why don't you try it on banjo this time? It's so crazy it might work." There was always a plan in mind, and nearly always the result was just what he wanted.<sup>1119</sup>

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<sup>1114</sup> Michael Davis, *Street Gang: The Complete History of Sesame Street* (New York: Viking Press, 2008) , 158.

<sup>1115</sup> Ibid, 158-159.

<sup>1116</sup> Ibid, 160.

<sup>1117</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>1118</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>1119</sup> Ibid, 161.

Drummer Steve Little appeared on the program for over 20 years and worked extensively with Cranshaw. He recalled that most of the music was recorded quickly and the schedule varied widely.

Sometimes we'd work a couple of times, (a week) sometimes we wouldn't work and sometimes we'd get very busy. Then we might go a month without playing because we prerecorded so much of that stuff. Most of the stuff we did with lead sheets. We did it very quickly and didn't ponder it too much. We'd play the stuff down and it just went out. Most of the time we didn't have arrangements except the occasional special with a larger band. When we were doing the programs, we were just doing them on lead sheets. We just played down the lead sheet. Once in a while Joe Raposo would say something specific but most of the time, we would just play it down without much polish.<sup>1120</sup>

Many musical guests appeared on the show including: Judy Collins, Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, Bruce Springsteen, Julie Andrews, Paula Abdul, Beyoncé, Tony Bennett, The Backstreet Boys, Erykah Badu, Sara Bareilles, Harry Belafonte, George Benson, David Bowie, Garth Brooks, Jimmy Buffett, Johnny Cash, Ray Charles, Celine Dion, Ellen DeGeneres, Bo Diddley, Placido Domingo, Eminem, Gloria Estefan, Melissa Ethridge, Jose Feliciano, Fergie, Renee Fleming, The Four Tops, Jamie Foxx, The Fugees, Crystal Gayle, Barry Gibb, Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Gregory and Maurice Hines, Lena Horne, Jennifer Hudson, Ice Cube, Mahalia Jackson, Michael Jackson, Waylon Jennings, Elton John, Norah Jones, Alicia Keys, Chaka Khan, B.B. King, Diana Krall, Gladys Knight and the Pips, Alison Krauss, Kronos Quartet, Patti Labelle, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Nathan Lane, Queen Latifah, John Legend, L.L. Cool J, Kenny Loggins, Loretta Lynn, Yo-Yo Ma, Ziggy Marley, Bruno Mars, Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Dave Matthews, Bobby McFerrin, Tim McGraw, Idina Menzel, Aaron Neville, Randy Newman, Donny Osmond, Seji Ozawa, Brad Paisley, Prince, Katy

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<sup>1120</sup> Steve Little, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 2018)



Perry, P!NK, The Pointer Sisters, Tito Puente, R.E.M., Smokey Robinson, Linda Ronstadt, Diana Ross, Dianne Schuur, Gene Simmons, Britney Spears, Taylor Swift, James Taylor, Carrie Underwood, Usher, Luther Vandross, Vanessa Williams and Neal Young.<sup>1121</sup> Steve Little recalled that recording music for guest artists varied widely.

It varied. Sometimes we made tracks for them. Other times they came into the studio and we played behind them. B.B. King, we played behind him. Sometimes, they'd bring some of their own guys and sometimes they wouldn't. Sometimes they'd bring their own bass player or their own drummer. We all played for Dizzy Gillespie and B.B. King and Ray Charles, but Ray Charles brought his own bass player.<sup>1122</sup>

*Sesame Street* also released albums of music from the program and music recorded specifically for albums. Details about personnel on these recordings are not clear but during Cranshaw's nearly 30-year career on the show, over 150 albums were released.<sup>1123</sup>

An undated session from 1969 was a second album from the Burt Collins and Joe Shepley group, the Collins/Shepley Galaxy, called *Lennon/McCartney Live*. The album is a collection of Beatles covers with the same personnel as the previous Collins/Shepley Galaxy album, with arrangements by Michael Abene.<sup>1124</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the entire album, which is not indicated by TJD, but confirmed by the album notes.<sup>1125</sup>

On January 14 Cranshaw recorded a Cedar Walton album for Prestige called *The Electric Boogaloo Song*.<sup>1126</sup> *The Electric Boogaloo Song* also featured Blue Mitchell,

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<sup>1121</sup> Anonymous, "List of Guest Stars on Sesame Street,"

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_guest\\_stars\\_on\\_Sesame\\_Street](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_guest_stars_on_Sesame_Street), accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1122</sup> Steve Little, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 2018)

<sup>1123</sup> Anonymous, "Sesame Street Discography,"

[https://muppet.fandom.com/wiki/Sesame\\_Street\\_discography](https://muppet.fandom.com/wiki/Sesame_Street_discography), accessed 26 March 2020.

<sup>1124</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1125</sup> Bob Thompson, notes to Collins/Shepley Galaxy, *Lennon/McCartney Live*, (1969) LP, MTA Records, NWS 4.

<sup>1126</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Clifford Jordan and Mickey Roker.<sup>1127</sup> This was the first time that Cranshaw played on an album led by Cedar Walton, though, Cranshaw had previously played on numerous albums with Walton as sidemen. Walton plays electric piano, probably a Hohner Clavinet, on the title track.<sup>1128</sup> This was the first time that Walton recorded on an electric piano.<sup>1129</sup> *The Electric Boogaloo Song* album Cranshaw back together with Roker and Walton, in a setting with much more freedom than on the first album they collaborated on, Milt Jackson's *Milt Jackson and the Hip String Quartet*, which was heavily arranged.

On February 14 Cranshaw recorded a session for the James Moody Prestige album *Don't Look Away Now!*.<sup>1130</sup> This was Moody's first quartet record in over 10 years and the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Barry Harris and Alan Dawson regular contributors to late 60's Prestige sessions.<sup>1131</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the entire album, which was unusual for the late 60's Prestige sessions. The choice of bass was Moody's request and Cranshaw is praised for his ability on the electric bass in the liner notes. They say:

...James (Moody) is accustomed to receiving the backing of an electric bass and at his suggestion Bob brought along a Fender to provide this particular sound. Fortunately, Cranshaw has a fine control over the instrument, producing a nice clean tone...<sup>1132</sup>

On February 25 and August 19 Cranshaw recorded two sessions with Duke Pearson and Mickey Roker for a Blue Note album titled *Merry Ole Soul*.<sup>1133</sup><sup>1134</sup> This

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<sup>1127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1128</sup> Don Schlitten, notes to Cedar Walton, *The Electric Boogaloo Song*, (1969) LP, Prestige Records, PR 7618.

<sup>1129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1130</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1131</sup> Mark Gardner, notes to James Moody, *Don't Look Away Now!*, (1969. 1997) CD, Prestige PR24015.

<sup>1132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1133</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1134</sup> The Lord Discography lists the dates at February 25 and August 19, the original notes to the album list the dates as February 21 and August 20.

Christmas themed album was Pearson's first album in a trio format since 1961's *Angel Eyes*, though Cranshaw and Pearson played one duet on *Prairie Dog*.<sup>1135</sup> Like on *Angel Eyes*, Pearson plays celeste on two of the tracks.<sup>1136</sup> The two sessions were split between Van Gelder's studio in February and A & R Studios in August.<sup>1137</sup>

TJD lists a session on February 27 with Cranshaw, Hank Jones and Grady Tate in Norwalk, CT. Oddly, the session is listed under the title *Jazz at the Lyman's*, which also shows several other performances between 1967 and 1978, but no label or release number are shown.<sup>1138</sup> Each listing shows different dates and performers including, all of whom are distinguished jazz artists, including: Ron Carter, Hank Jones, Bobby Timmons, Tommy Flanagan, Coleman Hawkins, Barry Harris and many others.<sup>1139</sup> This recording is a mystery, and an intriguing one at that.

On April 11 and 14 Cranshaw recorded two sessions for a Duke Pearson album on Blue Note called, *How Insensitive*.<sup>1140</sup> Joining Cranshaw in the rhythm section were Mickey Roker and Al Gafa.<sup>1141</sup> The album also featured a large vocal group called the New York Group Singers Big Band, which was a vocal ensemble arranged in the style of a traditional jazz big band. The composition of the group is described in the liner notes as: "...eight female voices as the trumpet sections, four male voices as trombones, and a

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<sup>1135</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Duke Pearson" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<sup>1136</sup> Father Norman O'Connor, notes to Duke Pearson, *Merry Old Soul*, (1969) LP, Blue Note Records, BST 84323.

<sup>1137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1138</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Jazz at the Lyman's" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/LeaderDetail?lid=33417&rid=166697> Accessed 6 March 2020.

<sup>1139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1140</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1141</sup> Ibid.

reed section of two girls (as alto saxophones) and three men filling out the section.”<sup>1142</sup>

The vocal group is on half of the selections and vocalist Andy Bey is also on some of tracks, as well as Latin percussion supplied by Airto and Dario Ferreira.<sup>1143</sup> The guitarist on the session, Al Gafa, recalled his impression of working with Cranshaw, he wrote:

I had always known Bob as an excellent musician, a terrific person, he'd go out of his way to make things easy, and the epitome of peace and calmness... Although Bob has passed, he is still alive for me because I will never forget the person and the player that he was. I'm so fortunate that our paths crossed.<sup>1144</sup>

On April 27 the Duke Pearson big band played a concert at the Famous Ballroom in Baltimore, MD for the Left Bank Jazz Society.<sup>1145</sup> The concert was recorded live and eventually released by Uptown Records, making it the final recording of Pearson's big band.<sup>1146</sup> The band features the same line up found on the two previous Pearson Big Band recordings and plays mostly the same repertoire, with the addition of three new arrangements, “Hi Fly,” “In The Still of the Night” and “Night Song (theme from *The Goldenboy*). The Pearson band also played at the 1969 Morgan State College Jazz Festival on Sunday June 22, but the group did not continue long term except for a short engagement at the Half Note in 1972.<sup>1147</sup>

On July 7 Cranshaw recorded a session led by Donald Byrd for Blue Note.<sup>1148</sup> Ultimately all of the tracks from this session were rejected and remain unissued.<sup>1149</sup>

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<sup>1142</sup> Nat Hentoff, notes to Duke Pearson, *How Insensitive*, (1969) LP, Blue Note Records, BST84344.

<sup>1143</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1144</sup> Al Gafa, personal correspondence, 1 February 2020.

<sup>1145</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1147</sup> Leonard Maltin, “Duke Pearson's Back in Town,” *Downbeat Magazine*, 12 April 1973, 15.

<sup>1148</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1149</sup> Ibid.

Byrd's closest release to the time that these tracks were recorded was *Fancy Free*, recorded on May 9 and June 6, Cranshaw did not play on either of those sessions.<sup>1150</sup> It is possible that the July 7 session was intended to be part of *Fancy Free* or it could have been intended for *Kofi*, Byrd's next album, which Cranshaw did play in, which was recorded in December of the same year.<sup>1151</sup> It is impossible to know for sure what the intent of the July 7 was since it has not been released.

On October 3 and November 21 Cranshaw recorded two sessions led by Duke Pearson which featured several Pearson originals inspired by Brazilian music.<sup>1152</sup> Pearson had been writing Brazilian inspired music since 1963's "Christo Redentor,"<sup>1153</sup> and his affinity for the culture and music had been growing ever since. The music went unissued until 1995 when it was paired with a separate February 1970 session featuring a different ensemble, which Cranshaw did not play on, and was released as *I Don't Care Who Knows It*.<sup>1154</sup>

On October 16 Cranshaw recorded a session with Mose Allison for his Atlantic album *Hello There, Universe*.<sup>1155</sup> Cranshaw played on three tracks, all Allison originals.<sup>1156</sup> This was the only Allison album that Cranshaw played on, however, the two

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<sup>1150</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Donald Byrd" *The Jazz Discography Online*.  
<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/LeaderDetail?lid=4559&rid=24802> Accessed 6 March 2020.

<sup>1151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1152</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1153</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Cristo Redentor" *The Jazz Discography Online*.  
<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/TuneDetail?tid=67729&rid=88586> Accessed 6 March 2020.

<sup>1154</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Duke Pearson" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<sup>1155</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1156</sup> Joel Dorn, notes to Mose Allison, *Hello There, Universe*, (1969) LP, Atlantic Records, SD 1550.

did work together as part of the Children’s Television Workshop on PBS. Cranshaw plays electric bass on all three tracks, though TJD does not indicate this.<sup>1157</sup>

On December 16 Cranshaw recorded a session with Donald Byrd for Blue Note.<sup>1158</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on one track, “Fufu” which is an African food.<sup>1159</sup> The music is influenced by Byrd’s time in studying Africa. In the liner notes he described his influences, he said:

The scenes I had in mind on these first two tunes... was the Black Star Square in Accra Ghana. I had the opportunity to spend time there studying... In fact, the entire album was to have a focus on Africa.<sup>1160</sup>

The music recorded at this session was not released until 1995 on Byrd’s album titled *Kofi*.<sup>1161</sup>

In 1970 Bob Cranshaw recorded an album with Billy Taylor’s orchestra presented by David Frost, called *O.K. Billy*.<sup>1162</sup> T.V. host David Frost began his US program in 1969 and the house band was Billy Taylor’s orchestra, which Cranshaw played in from the beginning of the show.<sup>1163</sup> Frost helped to present an album of the band from the show playing mostly original material written by Taylor.<sup>1164</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the album and it is some of the most rock and R&B oriented playing that Cranshaw has recorded.

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<sup>1157</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1159</sup> Herb Boyd, notes to Donald Byrd, *Kofi*, (1969, 1995) LP, Blue Note Records, B1-31875.

<sup>1160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1162</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1163</sup> Anonymous, “The David Frost Show” <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0063890/>, accessed 6 March 2020.

<sup>1164</sup> David Frost, notes to Billy Taylor, *OK Billy!*, (1970) LP, Bell Records, 6049.

During his time playing on the Frost program, Cranshaw was involved in a car accident that inhibited his ability to play the upright bass. He described the accident in an interview with Ethan Iverson. He said:

I was in a car accident when I was doing the David Frost show, so it messed up my back. Any time I was playing the string bass, I had to stop playing because the muscles in my back would tighten up. I still had to work, and I still wanted to play, so I said, "Okay, I'll play the electric." But I know that the jazz guys don't dig the electric, so I gotta make it sound and I gotta make it feel like I'm playing the string bass, because I'm not looking for them to change, so I gotta make it more inviting for them... There's no doubt about it.<sup>1165</sup>

Cranshaw knew that some musicians harbored bad feelings about the electric bass, even though they never said so to him. In an interview with Chris Jisi Cranshaw talked about his switch to electric.

No one complained about it to my face, but I know a lot of people resented it. Deep down, though, I think they liked what it could do, but admitting that meant knocking the upright. I would say the main reason I kept getting call-backs was that I didn't change the way I played; I was still a jazz player laying down four beats to the bar. I became the exception to the rule--a lot of leaders wouldn't let any other electric bassists on their bandstands. Musicians liked my feel and started to enjoy the way I played the instrument; some would say, 'If I hadn't seen your electric bass, I would have thought it was an upright.' I even tried to get prominent acoustic bassists to play the electric so they could inject their personalities into it and make the instrument more accepted. To this day, there are still jazzers who hate that I play electric bass.<sup>1166</sup>

Despite Cranshaw's difficulty playing acoustic bass during this period, he continued to play both instruments consistently on recordings for his entire career, only stopping playing acoustic bass for short lengths of time.<sup>1167</sup>

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<sup>1165</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1166</sup> Jisi, Chris. "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best," 33.

<sup>1167</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

On April 8 Cranshaw recorded a session with Horace Silver for his Blue Note album *That Healin' Feelin'*.<sup>1168</sup> This was the first installment in a trilogy of albums by Silver known as *The United States of Mind*.<sup>1169</sup> When the latter albums in the trilogy came out, *That Healin' Feelin'* became known as *Phase One*. Featuring Cranshaw, Mickey Roker, Andy Bey and George Coleman.<sup>1170</sup> The music on all three of the albums in the trilogy were a major departure for Silver, and the reception for them was mixed. Michael Cuscuna summarized the public reaction to Silver's change of style in his notes to the reissue in 2004, he wrote:

For Horace's core audience... What they'd come to expect was six brilliant, memorable instrumentals, skillfully arranged, and played by a state-of-the-art acoustic quintet. Here Horace was playing electric piano... and every track had a vocal with a spiritual or metaphysical message.<sup>1171</sup>

Cranshaw, too, played an electric instrument on all three volumes of *The United States of Mind*, which were recorded between 1970 and 1972.<sup>1172</sup> The other two volumes of the trilogy were *Phase Two: Total Response*, recorded on November 15 1970 and January 29, 1971 and *Phase Three: All*, recorded on January 17 and February 14 1972.<sup>1173</sup> Cranshaw, Roker and Andy Bey are on all three albums in the *United States of Mind* trilogy of albums, but other musicians on the sessions include: Harold Vick, Richie Resnicoff, Salome Bey, Cecil Bridgewater and Gail Nelson.<sup>1174</sup>

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<sup>1168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1169</sup> Horace Silver and Michael Cuscuna, notes to Horace Silver, *The United States of Mind*, (2004) CD, Blue Note Records, 73157.

<sup>1170</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1171</sup> Horace Silver and Michael Cuscuna, notes to Horace Silver, *The United States of Mind*.

<sup>1172</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1174</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."



On unspecified dates in 1971 Cranshaw recorded for a Quincy Jones album called *Smackwater Jack*.<sup>1175</sup> The album is a collection of music that Jones wrote for film and television as well as pop hits like “What’s Goin’ On” and “Smackwater Jack,” both of which feature Jones on singing.<sup>1176</sup> Cranshaw is one of four bassists listed on the album, no specific information is given for who plays on what track so it is difficult to determine which tracks feature Cranshaw. The notes to the album do specify that Cranshaw only played acoustic bass, not electric, on the album.<sup>1177</sup>

At some point in the early 1970s Cranshaw became the bassist for the Broadway musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Cranshaw was not the original bassist, and did not play on the 1970 album, but he did play for the original Broadway production, which ran from 1971-1973. Guitarist Andy Schwartz heard anecdotal recollections of Cranshaw in the band.

...unlike many true-blue jazz artists, he didn’t shy away from making a living. In terms of working in the commercial world. He was the bass player in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. I don't know how many jazz artists would want to do something like that. I have a friend who subbed the guitar chair and he said Bob was amazing on that show.<sup>1178</sup>

In 1972 Cranshaw recorded on unspecified dates with Astrud Gilberto for her Perception Records album, *Now*.<sup>1179</sup> There are two other bassists, Ron Carter and Patrick Adams, listed as playing on the album as well.<sup>1180</sup> Neither the notes to the album,<sup>1181</sup> nor

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<sup>1175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1176</sup> Ralph J. Gleason, notes to Quincy Jones, *Smackwater Jack*, (1971) LP, A&M Records, SP3073.

<sup>1177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1178</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>1179</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1180</sup> Anonymous, notes to Astrud Gilberto, *Now*, (1972) LP, Perception Records, PLP 29.

<sup>1181</sup> Ibid.

TJD specify what tracks Cranshaw played on. *Now* is the only time that Cranshaw recorded with Astrud Gilberto.<sup>1182</sup>

Cranshaw also recorded with the Irish group The Clancy Brothers for their 1972 album *Show Me the Way* released by Audiofidelity Enterprises.<sup>1183</sup> Another session from 1972-1973 was for Paul Simon's album *There Goes Rhymin' Simon*.<sup>1184</sup> Cranshaw plays on three tracks on the album with Grady Tate. The notes list the recording locations as Muscle Shoals Studio in Alabama and Morgan Studios in London, but Cranshaw recalled playing his tracks live with Simon in New York.<sup>1185</sup>

On March 1, 1972 Cranshaw recorded an album led by Jimmy Heath of Cobblestone records called, *The Gap Sealer*.<sup>1186</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass for the entire album, and his ability to produce the same feel on both acoustic and electric bass is mentioned in the album notes. They say: "Bob Cranshaw is one of the very few bassists who is able to transfer from the upright bass to the Fender version the qualities of touch and tone needed to sustain a jazz performance."<sup>1187</sup> *The Gap Sealer* was the first time that Jimmy Heath recorded with electric bass, and Bob Cranshaw is the only bassist to ever record with Heath on electric bass.<sup>1188</sup> Jimmy Heath is one of several jazz artists to record with Cranshaw as their first, and only, electric bassist.

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<sup>1182</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1183</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to The Clancy Brothers, *Show Me the Way*, (1972) LP, Audiofidelity Enterprises, ASFD 6252.

<sup>1184</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>1185</sup> Paul Simon, notes to Paul Simon, *There Goes Rhymin' Simon*, (1973) LP, Columbia Records, 32280.

<sup>1186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1187</sup> Doug Ramsey, notes to Jimmy Heath, *The Gap Sealer*, (1972) LP, Cobblestone Records, 9012.

<sup>1188</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Jimmy Heath" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=2525> Accessed 6 March 2020.

In the spring of 1972 Cranshaw recorded with Harold White and Ralph McDonald a new rhythm section for previously recorded Junior Mance album called *That Lovin' Feelin'*.<sup>1189</sup> The notes to the 1972 release explain that the album had been previously released on a different album, but with a different rhythm section. The notes say:

This particular Mance record, it should be noted, has a rather unique history. It was produced for a label on which it had a very limited distribution (Tuba). But the Milestone MSP9041 album, "That Lovin' Feelin'", is by no means identical. Not only has it been totally re-edited and re-mixed, but on six of the numbers (except the ballads "The good life" and "When Sunny gets blue" and the slow blues "Lee's lament" that closes the second side) a totally new rhythmic backing has been substituted. Drummer Harold White, percussionist Ralph McDonald, and Bob Cranshaw on Fender bass were the imaginative gentlemen participating in the experiment in the spring of 1972.<sup>1190</sup>

Without knowing the background of this album, it would be nearly impossible to tell that the piano had been recorded 5 years prior with a totally different backing band. Cranshaw plays electric bass on the 1972 rhythm section tracks.<sup>1191</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Mance since Joe Williams' 1964 album *Havin' a Good Time*.<sup>1192</sup>

On April 6 1972 Cranshaw recorded two tracks for the Bobby Pierce album *Introducing Bobby Pierce* on Cobblestone Records.<sup>1193</sup> *Introducing Bobby Pierce* is Pierce's first recording as a leader and features Cranshaw with Pat Martino and Roy Brooks.<sup>1194</sup> Cranshaw plays on only two tracks, with Pierce playing organ bass on the other four tracks. Pierce sings on both tracks that Cranshaw plays on.

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<sup>1189</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1190</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Junior Mance, *That Lovin' Feelin'*, (1972) LP, Milestone Records, MSP 9041.

<sup>1191</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1194</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Bobby Pierce" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www-lordisco.com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=40275> Accessed 6 March 2020.

On July 14 1972, Cranshaw recorded with Sonny Rollins for the first time since 1965's *There Will Never Be Another You*.<sup>1195</sup> This album, called *Sonny Rollins Next Album* was significant because it was the first time that Rollins had recorded since September of 1968.<sup>1196</sup> Rollins stopped performing in the late 60's and this album marked his return to the public eye.<sup>1197</sup> This was similar to the break Rollins took before recording *The Bridge*, and in both cases, Cranshaw was the bassist for Rollins' return to recording.<sup>1198</sup> In fact, Cranshaw is the only sideman that played on both *The Bridge*, and *Sonny Rollins Next Album*. Cranshaw plays both electric and acoustic basses, the first time that Rollins recorded with electric bass. Cranshaw described his approach to playing with Rollins as the same on both basses. He said:

I just played it. I never thought about it; never studied. I just picked it up. A bass is a bass. That's my attitude... I did the same thing with Sonny. When I started to play the electric with Sonny, he could hear it. Not that he wanted it more. I'm playing the same notes I want to play. I never thought about it. Same thing I'm gonna play here, (on upright) I'm gonna play here (on electric.) No different. I didn't make a difference in my mind. I didn't go through that. I just wanted it to sound more like a string bass and that's what I played.<sup>1199</sup>

For the remainder of Rollins' career, electric bass, not upright, became the instrument of choice for his band, though Cranshaw did occasionally play electric upright with Rollins in the later part of his career.<sup>1200</sup>

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<sup>1195</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1196</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Sonny Rollins" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<sup>1197</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Sonny Rollins Next Album*, (1972) LP, Milestone Records, MSP 9042.

<sup>1198</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Sonny Rollins" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<sup>1199</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1200</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Sonny Rollins" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

In August of 1972 Cranshaw recorded Johnny Lytle's album *People and Love* for the Milestone label.<sup>1201</sup> The album has two Lytle's originals and the pop songs, "People Make the World Go Round" and "Where is the Love?".<sup>1202</sup> The jazz instrumental versions of pop songs, combined with Lytle's groove oriented originals, put Cranshaw in a pop context for the entirety of the album. The ease with which Cranshaw is able to adapt his playing to this context is impressive.

On November 6 and 10, 1972, Cranshaw recorded two sessions for Horace Silver's album *In Pursuit of the 27th Man*.<sup>1203</sup> *In Pursuit of the 27th Man* album was a return to instrumental compositions for Silver, after the vocal-heavy albums in Silver's *United States of Mind* trilogy. This was the fourth Silver album in a row between 1970 and 1972 to feature the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Roker and Silver.<sup>1204</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass for the entire album.<sup>1205</sup> *In Pursuit of the 27th Man* also features both Randy and Michael Brecker and is one of Michael Brecker's earliest recordings.<sup>1206</sup>

In 1973, on unspecified dates, Cranshaw recorded a session with Lionel Hampton that was combined with two other sessions for an album called *Hamp's Blues*.<sup>1207</sup><sup>1208</sup> On the tracks that Cranshaw plays on, Hampton is backed by an electric ensemble. Cranshaw plays electric bass, though TJD does not specify this.<sup>1209</sup> The rest of the rhythm section is

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<sup>1201</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1202</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Johnny Lytle, *People and Love*, (1972) LP, Milestone Records, MSP 9043.

<sup>1203</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1204</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Horace Silver" The Jazz Discography Online.

<sup>1205</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1206</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Michael Brecker" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=905&rid=128592> Accessed 7 March 2020.

<sup>1207</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1208</sup> Yuzo Fujimoto, notes to Lionel Hampton, *Hamp's Blues*, (1986) CD, Denon Records, 33C38-7973.

<sup>1209</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

electric as well and includes organ and electric guitar.<sup>1210</sup> Three of the selections are Horace Silver compositions, arranged for a large ensemble.<sup>1211</sup> Hampton produced the session for his own label, Glad Hamp, but never released the music until it was put out in Japan by Denon Records.<sup>1212</sup> This release also included a session which Cranshaw played on, recorded on September 8 of 1974 that featured a different ensemble, co-led by Hampton and Buddy Rich. In an unusual switch, Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on this session.

Another undated session from 1973 was for Jimmy Ponder's album *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*.<sup>1213</sup> Cranshaw plays on four tracks, splitting electric bass duties with Wilbur Bascomb.<sup>1214</sup> String arrangements are by Bob James, though TJD does not indicate this. On the track, "I Who Have Nothing," Cranshaw frequently plays high double stops. This is the first example of Cranshaw using this technique on record.

In September or October of 1973 Cranshaw played on David Lee Jr.'s album *Evolution* on Supernal Records.<sup>1215</sup> Most of the album is Lee alone playing overdubbed percussion, but Cranshaw plays on three tracks on the album. The sessions for the album were on September 6, 7 and 9 and October 13.<sup>1216</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the sessions. The music is avant-garde and one of the most experimental sounding albums that Cranshaw ever played on.

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<sup>1210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1211</sup> Yuzo Fujimoto, notes to Lionel Hampton, *Hamp's Blues*, (1986) CD, Denon Records, 33C38-7973.

<sup>1212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1213</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1214</sup> Anonymous, notes to Jimmy Ponder, *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, (1973) LP, Cadet Records, CA50048.

<sup>1215</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1216</sup> David Lee Jr., notes to David Lee Jr., *Evolution*, (1973) LP, Supernal Records, SES1973/4.

On April 2 1973 Cranshaw recorded with Kenny Barron for his Muse album, *Sunset to Dawn*.<sup>1217</sup> *Sunset to Dawn* was Barron's first album as a leader.<sup>1218</sup> Cranshaw not only plays electric bass on the album, but all of the band members also play percussion instruments.<sup>1219</sup> Cranshaw studied percussion while in high school, but had never before played any percussion on a recording.

In the summer of 1973 Cranshaw worked regularly with Sonny Rollins. From June to September Rollins maintained a consistent rhythm section unit of Cranshaw, David Lee and Yoshiaki Masuo. From June to July the group recorded Rollins' album *Horn Culture* in New York and Berkeley CA.<sup>1220</sup> *Horn Culture* also featured Jack DeJohnette and Walter Davis on some tracks.<sup>1221</sup> The same group also played several concerts in New York, France, The Netherlands and Japan. All of these concerts were recorded and available, the New York, France and Japan performances are available as albums, the Netherlands concert is available on video.

On June 11, in between stints working with Rollins, in the summer of 1973, Cranshaw recorded with Jimmy Heath for his Muse album *Love and Understanding*.<sup>1222</sup> It was Jimmy Heath's next record following *The Gap Sealer*, both of which feature Cranshaw on electric bass.<sup>1223</sup> The notes describe Cranshaw's unique ability to transfer the feeling of jazz to the electric bass. They say:

Bob Cranshaw... one hardly knows how to celebrate him sufficiently, except by saying, "Listen." ... By Combining the facility of the Fender bass

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<sup>1217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1218</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Kenny Barron" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www.lordisco.com/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=13&rid=10779> Accessed 7 March 2020.

<sup>1219</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1223</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Jimmy Heath" *The Jazz Discography Online*.

with the warmth of sound associated with the acoustic bass, he has developed into an imaginative, dependable and flexible accompanist. His superlative work was a contributing factor to the excellence of Jimmy's last record..."<sup>1224</sup>

This album is also unique because it features a cello, played by Bernard Fennell, in the front line with Heath and Curtis Fuller.<sup>1225</sup> Fennell does not solo, (according to the notes he is not an improviser)<sup>1226</sup> but the texture of cello adds beautifully to the melody statements on the album.

On June 28 and 29 Cranshaw recorded two sessions for Hark Crawford's' album *Wildflower*, on Kudu Records.<sup>1227</sup> The band is a large ensemble (23 members) that includes a four piece female vocal group.<sup>1228</sup> The album's arrangements are by Bob James.<sup>1229</sup> TJD nor the album notes specify, but Cranshaw plays electric bass on the entire album.

On July 7, 1973 Cranshaw performed with several groups at the Montreux Jazz festival in Switzerland.<sup>1230</sup> The rhythm section was Cranshaw, Hampton Hawes and Kenny Clarke.<sup>1231</sup> This rhythm section played as a trio, behind a group led by Gene Ammons with special guests Cannonball Adderley, Nat Adderley and Dexter Gordon and with Gordon's group. Three albums were made from performances recorded live at the festival and released on Prestige Records. The albums are Hampton Hawes' *Playin' in the Yard*, Gene Ammons' *Gene Ammons and Friends at Montreux* and Dexter Gordon's

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<sup>1224</sup> Gary Giddins, notes to Jimmy Heath, *Love and Understanding*, (1973) LP, Muse Records, MR5028.

<sup>1225</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1226</sup> Gary Giddins, notes to Jimmy Heath, *Love and Understanding*.

<sup>1227</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1231</sup> Ibid.



*Blues à la Suisse*.<sup>1232</sup> Cranshaw played electric bass on all of the recordings and Hawes played a Fender Rhodes electric piano. Cranshaw recalled Hawes being very intoxicated for the performances. In a photo on the back of the Gene Ammons album from this concert, Gordon, Nat Adderley, Cannonball Adderley, and Hawes can be seen drinking together, though there is no indication of when the photo was taken.<sup>1233</sup>

On October 22 Cranshaw recorded with Willis Jackson for his Muse album *West Africa*.<sup>1234</sup> This was the sixth album that Cranshaw had recorded for the Muse label and the notes comment on how frequently he had been playing for their records. They say:

Not much need be said about that rhythm section except that you couldn't ask for more swing, more life, more music from one group of people. Ted Dunbar, Bob Cranshaw and Freddie Waits have been playing so much music in so many different contexts with so many people that if you don't know much about them you must have been asleep for several years.<sup>1235</sup>

While Cranshaw had recorded several times with Freddie Waits, this was his first time recording with both Willis Jackson and Ted Dunbar.<sup>1236</sup>

On October 30 Cranshaw recorded one of his favorite albums, Errol Garner's *Magician*, on the London Records label.<sup>1237</sup> The album also features Grady Tate on drums.<sup>1238</sup> Cranshaw shared his memories of the session in an interview with Ethan Iverson.

He played a tune; it was his tune. He said, "Okay, Bob. I'm just gonna play a little of it so you can hear it." He played the tune down. (he said) "Okay, now we'll make a take. Take one!" He turned back to the piano and put his hands down for an intro. He was in another key. He had no idea. He played

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<sup>1232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1233</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Gene Ammons, *Gene Ammons and Friends At Montreux*, (1973) LP, Prestige Records, P-10078.

<sup>1234</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1235</sup> Peter Keepnews, notes to Willis Jackson, *West Africa*, (1973) LP, Muse Records MR5036.

<sup>1236</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1238</sup> Ibid.

by ear... I heard it, so I didn't panic... wherever his hands were, that's where it was. He had no idea. He couldn't read shit... He did it a few times... Wherever he turns, wherever his hands hit, he'd play there.<sup>1239</sup>

Cranshaw was accustomed to frequently changing keys from his time with Sonny Rollins and in the notes to *Magician*, he was quoted as saying: "I've been getting' ready for this date for 25 years."<sup>1240</sup>

On November 13 Cranshaw recorded a second album with Bobby Pierce for Muse Records, called *New York*.<sup>1241</sup> Pierce expressed his happiness at working with Cranshaw again in the notes, he said: "He sure held the bottom... It's been two times I've played with him and each time it's been a pleasure. He was really helpful."<sup>1242</sup> The rhythm section of Cranshaw, Ted Dunbar and Freddie Waits was identical to the rhythm section on Willis Jackson's *West Africa*. *New York* also reunited Cranshaw with his MJT+3 bandmate Frank Strozier. They had not recorded together since the final MJT+3 album in 1960.<sup>1243</sup>

In 1974 on an unspecified date, Cranshaw recorded an album with George Freeman called *Man and Woman*, on the Groove Merchant label.<sup>1244</sup> The album lists "Bernard Traps" as one of the drummers, which was actually Buddy Rich under a pseudonym.<sup>1245</sup> *Man and Woman* was Cranshaw's first recording with Rich. Rich plays on just two tracks, "Just Squeeze Me" and "Georgia on my Mind." Cranshaw plays electric bass for the entire album. *Man and Woman* album also brought Cranshaw and

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<sup>1239</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1240</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to Erroll Garner, *Magician*, (1973) LP, London Records, APS 640.

<sup>1241</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1242</sup> Gary Giddins, notes to Bobby Pierce, *New York*, (1973) LP, Muse Records, MR5030.

<sup>1243</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1245</sup> Ibid.

Harold Mabern back together on record for the first time since Lee Morgan's *The Gigolo* in 1965.<sup>1246</sup>

In February and March of 1974 Cranshaw recorded several pieces with Mary Lou Williams for her album *Zoning*.<sup>1247</sup> Cranshaw and Roker had already worked with Williams at the Hickory House in New York, but this was the first time the group had recorded. Cranshaw recalled that Roker had gotten him the gig and that their time together was very enjoyable. He said:

Mickey got me on the gig... Mary Lou, I had a good time with. We worked at the Hickory House here in New York. I remember I had a good time. Worked. Made good money in a nice place to play. I had a wonderful time with Mary Lou; a great experience.<sup>1248</sup>

*Zoning* features Cranshaw and Williams playing two duets, "Holy Ghost," and "Medi I." The album also features multiple pieces with odd meters and meter changes. Hearing Cranshaw play in 11/4 on "Intermission" and 7/4 on "Zoning Fungus II" is a rare treat.

On April 20, 1974 Cranshaw played a live concert at the home of Pat and Gerry Macdonald in Sea Cliff New York with Zoot Sims, Jimmy Rowles and Mickey Roker.<sup>1249</sup> The concert was recorded and released as *Zoot Sims Party*. This was Cranshaw's first time recording with Jimmy Rowles and Cranshaw had not recorded with Sims since the JATP tours of 1966-1967.<sup>1250</sup> The notes single out Cranshaw's ability on electric bass, they say: "Bob Cranshaw, so right on time and changes, making even the electric bass sound as if it belonged in a jazz group."<sup>1251</sup> According to the notes the final piece, "The

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<sup>1246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1248</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1249</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to Zoot Sims, *Zoot Sims' Party*, (1974) LP, Choice Records, CRS 1006.

<sup>1250</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1251</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to Zoot Sims, *Zoot Sims' Party*.

Very Thought of You,” is missing Roker because he had to leave for another gig with Dizzy Gillespie later the same day.<sup>1252</sup>

On May 16, 1974 Cranshaw recorded his second and final album with Willis Jackson, *Headed and Gutted*.<sup>1253</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass throughout the whole record. *Headed and Gutted* was also Cranshaw’s final recording with both Pat Martino and Freddie Waits.<sup>1254</sup>

On July 6, 1974 Cranshaw performed with Sonny Rollins’ band at the Montreux Jazz Festival.<sup>1255</sup> For some reason this album is missing from Cranshaw’s TJD entry. The album features Cranshaw, Rollins, Rufus Harley on bagpipes, Yoshiaki Masuo on guitar and David Lee on drums.<sup>1256</sup> According to the notes the crowd brought Rollins back for three encores and the set lasted until nearly 2 a.m..<sup>1257</sup>

The same group appeared for an undated performance in 1974 at Ronnie Scott’s jazz club in London.<sup>1258</sup> It is likely, however, that this performance was late in the year since *The Cutting Edge* was recorded on July 6 and the video of the Ronnie Scott’s performance mentions promoting the album.<sup>1259</sup> The performance was recorded for a BBC program called 2nd House but only a small portion of the performance was used for broadcast in the program. The full audio and video recordings were preserved by the

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<sup>1252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1253</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1255</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Sonny Rollins, *The Cutting Edge*, (1974) Milestone Records, M-9059.

<sup>1256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1258</sup> David Meeker, “Bob Cranshaw” *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1259</sup> Charles Chabot, “Sonny Rollins ‘74 - Rescued!,” *Arena*, Season 37, Ep. 3 (2012), BBC, Illumination Films.

project's assistant film editor, Charles Chabot.<sup>1260</sup> The performance features Cranshaw, Rollins, Rufus Harley on bagpipes, Yoshiaki Masuo and David Lee.

On October 3 Cranshaw recorded an album with Buddy Rich called *The Last Blues Album Volume 1*.<sup>1261</sup> This was Cranshaw's first time playing on an album led by Rich. The members of the rhythm section all play electric instruments, including Jimmy McGriff on organ, Kenny Barron on Fender Rhodes, George Freeman on guitar and Cranshaw on electric bass.<sup>1262</sup> One of the tracks on the album, a blues called "Alright" used Cranshaw's signature salutation as its title.

On an undated session in 1974 Cranshaw recorded one track for Barry Manilow's album *Barry Manilow II*.<sup>1263</sup> Cranshaw played on the track "Avenue C."<sup>1264</sup> The album, which also included Manilow's biggest hit ever, "Mandy," sold over a million copies and was certified platinum in 1987.<sup>1265</sup>

### Part XI: 1975 - 1990

In 1975 Cranshaw began playing for the new television series Saturday Night Live (SNL) under the direction of Howard Shore.<sup>1266</sup> Cranshaw also played on television and radio commercials throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Guitarist Andy Schwartz remembered working with Cranshaw on these sessions.

Bob and I met in the 1970s doing jingle dates. Commercial announcements is the formal title for that. We were part of a giant freelance army working for assorted jungles houses. He was already an iconic figure in music. When

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<sup>1260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1263</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>1264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1265</sup> Anonymous, "Barry Manilow: Gold & Platinum," [https://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab\\_active=default-award&ar=Barry+Manilow&ti=Barry+Manilow+II#search\\_section](https://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab_active=default-award&ar=Barry+Manilow&ti=Barry+Manilow+II#search_section), accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1266</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

you go to a session in your early 20s and get to play with somebody like Bob Cranshaw it's a pretty awe-inspiring experience. And most of those sessions were simple music. It was usually no more than lead sheets, chord charts and come up with a part. Bob always came up with the best parts. Fantastic ear and always played what was right without judging the music. Along with Bob there were a host of other really impressive musicians on the scene. It was a very fertile time to be a freelance musician in NY. The golden age of recording was in its final decade. 75 to maybe 85... That's where I met him, and it was always thrilling to play with somebody like that. Because he was the ultimate professional. Always cool, always relaxed and he was a good role model for a lot of us. Whether we played guitar or bass or rhythm section, drums whatever. It was great to have Bob Cranshaw on the date.<sup>1267</sup>

Schwartz became a composer for these sessions and recalled hiring Cranshaw to play on a session that he had written music for.

I started doing some jingle arranging and writing. So, there was this one product that I wrote a kind of hipster walking bass thing a la Ricky Lee Jones take on jazz. And I wanted to have Bob on this, and I called him, and I wrote out a part that was jazz walking bass 101. It was incredibly simple. Bob showed up and I said "The chord changes are there. This is just a sketch, so you know where it's going." We started cutting it and were taking a break and he was playing it note for note. "I said why don't you (play your own line)" He said "No, what you wrote is just fine and I'm gonna play that." And I walked away from that kind of stunned. Because he could've taken that to the ends of the earth, stylistically, he could've gone full tilt. Instead he said, "I can make this work, just the way you did it." Of course, he made it sound beautiful. But for a young arranger to have Bob Cranshaw play what you wrote and not feel obliged to inject himself into it, in terms of changing the part, that was really something. Honestly, I wanted him to change the part, but he said nope, "It's fine." He put Bob on it without changing the written part.<sup>1268</sup>

On an unspecified date in 1975 Cranshaw recorded another session led by Buddy Rich featuring singer's Jackie Paris and Anne Marie Moss.<sup>1269</sup> The session only yielded three songs which were included on a compilation album *The Best of The Jazz Singers:*

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<sup>1267</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>1268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1269</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

*Volume 2* on LRC Records.<sup>1270</sup> The rhythm section is Cranshaw, Rich and Kenny Barron with an unidentified saxophonist. Cranshaw and Barron both play electric instruments.<sup>1271</sup>

On an undated series of sessions in 1975 Cranshaw recorded with Jack McDuff for his Cadet album *Magnetic Feel*.<sup>1272</sup> According to the notes to the album, the recording took several months, but it is unclear what tracks were recorded when.<sup>1273</sup> The notes also mention that McDuff plays organ bass on “Black Jack” and synth bass on “Blue Monsoon.”<sup>1274</sup> The album also featured George Benson, this was Cranshaw’s last album with Benson and his only album with McDuff.<sup>1275</sup>

On unspecified dates in 1975 Cranshaw recorded with Jimmy McGriff for his 1975 album *Stump Juice* on Groove Merchant records.<sup>1276</sup> Cranshaw played electric bass on the session, though TJD, nor the album notes indicate this.<sup>1277</sup> Cranshaw only plays on two tracks, “Stump Juice” and “Purple Onion.”<sup>1278</sup>

In the mid-1970s Cranshaw recorded an album with Reuben Wilson called *The Cisco Kid* on the Groove Merchant label.<sup>1279</sup> A standout of this album is George Coleman, who is uncredited in the album notes, but is listed in TJD.<sup>1280</sup> Coleman’s sound is unmistakable in his solo on the title track.” *The Cisco Kid* was Cranshaw’s only time recording with Wilson.<sup>1281</sup>

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<sup>1270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1273</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Brother Jack McDuff, *Magnetic Feel*, (1975) LP, Cadet Records, 60039.

<sup>1274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1275</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1277</sup> Anonymous, notes to Jimmy McGriff, *Stump Juice*, (1975) LP, Groove Merchant, 1033.

<sup>1278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1279</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1280</sup> Anonymous, notes to Reuben Wilson, *The Cisco Kid*, (1975) LP, Groove Merchant, GM523.

<sup>1281</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

On January 17, 1975 Cranshaw played on a session for Horace Silver's album *Silver 'N Brass* on Blue Note Records.<sup>1282</sup> Cranshaw plays on two tracks, "Kissin' Cousins" and "The Sophisticated Hippie," the rest of the album features Ron Carter on bass.<sup>1283</sup> Silver described "Kissin' Cousins" as "A musical tribute to undying friendship"<sup>1284</sup> and "The Sophisticated Hippie" as "A musical tribute to the late great Duke Ellington." Cranshaw plays electric bass throughout the album.

On November 4 and 5, 1975 Cranshaw played on two sessions led by Lou Donaldson for Blue Note Records.<sup>1285</sup> Unfortunately, none of the music from these sessions has been released. These were the only sessions Cranshaw ever recorded with Lou Donaldson.<sup>1286</sup>

On June 24 and July 18, 1975 Cranshaw recorded sessions for Kimiko Kasai's album *This is My Love*, on the Japanese Sony label.<sup>1287</sup> The album features a star-studded ensemble including Lee Konitz and Stan Getz.<sup>1288</sup> The music on the album is a mix of jazz standards and pop hits. Cranshaw plays electric bass throughout the album.

Cranshaw recorded with Sonny Rollins on September 2-5 in Berkeley CA for his album *Nucleus*.<sup>1289</sup> Cranshaw played electric bass on three tracks on the album, the other bassist on the session is Chuck Rainey, who played on the remaining four tracks.<sup>1290</sup> The

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<sup>1282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1284</sup> Horace Silver, notes to Horace Silver, *Silver 'N Brass*, (1975) LP, Blue Note Records, BN-LA406-G.

<sup>1285</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1290</sup> Ibid.



title of the album is a reference to Rollins' nickname "Newk."<sup>1291</sup> The music is a mix of funk and soul inspired grooves, but on Rollins' original "Azalea" the band swings and gives an indication of the musical direction that would dominate Rollins career for the rest of his life.

On September 27 and 28 Cranshaw recorded in New York with Rollins' guitarist Yoshiaki Masuo for his album *11 Sullivan Street*.<sup>1292</sup> The band were all members of Rollins' rhythm section and included Cranshaw, Masuo and David Lee. Cranshaw played on three of the album's eight tracks. Cranshaw plays electric bass on all three tracks. *11 Sullivan Street* was released only in Japan.<sup>1293</sup>

In 1976 Cranshaw recorded a series of sessions for an Antonio Carlos Jobim double album called *Terra Brasilis* on Warner Brothers Records.<sup>1294</sup> The album features 20 Jobim compositions with a large orchestra arranged and conducted by Claus Ogerman.<sup>1295</sup> Cranshaw Plays on 14 of the album's 20 tracks. *Terra Brasilis* also features Jobim singing many of his most famous songs.

In 1976 Cranshaw recorded two albums led by James Moody on unspecified dates, they are *Timeless Aura* and *Sun Journey*, both on Vanguard Records.<sup>1296</sup> Both albums feature the same rhythm section of Cranshaw, Kenny Barron, Roland Prince, Eddie Gladden and percussionist Emanuel Rahim.<sup>1297</sup> On *Timeless Aura*, Moody is joined by Joe Newman for four tracks, on *Sun Journey*, Clark Terry is on one track, Randy

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<sup>1291</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Nucleus*, (1975) LP, Milestone Records, M9064.

<sup>1292</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1293</sup> Anonymous, notes to Yoshiaki Masuo, *11 Sullivan Street*, (1975) East Wind Records, EW-8020.

<sup>1294</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1297</sup> Ibid.

Brecker is on one other.<sup>1298</sup> Like many jazz artists in the mid 1970's Moody embraced funk and soul influences on both albums. Cranshaw plays electric bass for both albums.

Two other undated sessions from 1976 were for Roland Prince's albums *Color Visions* and *Free Spirit*, both are on Vanguard Records.<sup>1299</sup> They are Prince's first and second albums as a leader.<sup>1300</sup> Like both of Moody's records from the same year on Vanguard, the rhythm section is Cranshaw and Barron but Eddie Moore replaces Eddie Gladden on *Color Visions* and Mickey Roker and Al Foster play on *Free Spirit*.<sup>1301</sup> The ensemble is a large group, as the notes to *Color Visions* describe, they are a who's who of New York session musicians. The notes say:

More than likely... you are quite familiar with them, as they are all seasoned artists of great stature. Randy Brecker, Joe Farrell, Kenny Barron, Frank Foster and Bob Cranshaw are among the busiest and most prolific musicians in America.<sup>1302</sup>

Cranshaw plays electric bass on all but one track on each album. On *Color Visions* he is replaced by Buster Williams for on track and on *Free Spirit* he is replaced by David Williams on one track.<sup>1303</sup>

Another undated session, (or sessions) Cranshaw played in 1976 was for Bobby Scott's album, *From Eden to Canaan*.<sup>1304</sup> Cranshaw had previously worked with Scott on several albums, most recently, they had both played on Kimiko Kasai's album *This is My Love* in 1975. Scott was best known as a composer for his songs "A Taste of Honey" and

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<sup>1298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1299</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1300</sup> Stella Marrs, notes to Roland Prince, *Free Spirit*, (1977) Vanguard Records, VSD 79388.

<sup>1301</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1302</sup> Ed Williams, notes to Roland Prince, *Color Visions*, (1976) Vanguard Records, VSD 79371.

<sup>1303</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1304</sup> Ibid.

“He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother” both of which were major hits.<sup>1305</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the entire record.<sup>1306</sup>

On January 6, 1976, Cranshaw recorded a session for Mike Longo’s album *Talk With The Spirits* on Pablo Records.<sup>1307</sup> The album is credited to both Longo and Dizzy Gillespie on TJD, but according to the notes, Gillespie only produced the album.<sup>1308</sup> The music on the album is heavily groove oriented, as the notes describe:

The songs themselves were derived from five different “grooves” utilizing elements from the contemporary idiom which were then expanded into larger structures that lent themselves well to jazz interpretation.<sup>1309</sup>

Longo wrote all five of the compositions on the album.<sup>1310</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on all five tracks, though TJD nor the album notes specify what bass he plays.<sup>1311</sup>

On February 25, 26 and 27 1976 Cranshaw recorded sessions for Buddy Rich’s album *Speak No Evil*.<sup>1312</sup> The album features Rich playing in a disco/funk style on arrangements of popular hits by Richard Evans.<sup>1313</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the whole album.<sup>1314</sup> Cranshaw remembered that Rich could not read music well, but was able to play the music perfectly after hearing it. Cranshaw said:

He played that shit like he owned it. Buddy Rich used to do that shit. Period. Buddy had a magical thing you could put an arrangement down, he couldn’t read shit and he’d play that motherfucker like he wrote it, (the) first time he

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<sup>1305</sup> Bruce Lundval, notes to Bobby Scott, *From Eden to Canaan*, (1976) CBS Records, PC 34325.

<sup>1306</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1308</sup> Mike Longo and Dizzy Gillespie, notes to Mike Longo, *Talk With The Spirits*, (1976) Pablo Records, 2310-769.

<sup>1309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1312</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1313</sup> Anonymous, notes to Buddy Rich, *Speak No Evil*, (1976) RCA Records, APL1-1503.

<sup>1314</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

played it. You put some charts down and he just had a sense for some shit.<sup>1315</sup>

On April 17 1977, Cranshaw performed a concert at Carnegie Hall with Mary Lou Williams and Cecil Taylor.<sup>1316</sup> Williams conceived the concert as a way to bridge the gap between avant-garde and straight-ahead jazz.<sup>1317</sup> The result was not what Williams had hoped for, and the concert has become infamous for the way that Taylor's playing dominated the entire performance. In a letter to Taylor after the concert Williams expressed her frustration with Taylor, she wrote:

You will have a chance to listen to the original tapes and will agree that being angry you created monotony, corruption and noise. Please forgive me for saying so. Why destroy your great talent clowning etc.?... I am hoping that you will reimburse me for 30 tickets...<sup>1318</sup>

Cranshaw also recalled Williams being upset with him and Mickey Roker for not being able to control Taylor. He said:

I remember when Mary Lou did a concert at Carnegie Hall and she had Cecil Taylor. I guess it was just going to be her and Cecil Taylor, but Cecil was out, so she called me and Mickey to help her. She got pissed at us at the end of the gig, because there was no way we could control Cecil Taylor. When he went out, he was gone. There wasn't nothing we could do about it... She thought that we would be able to control it, so when we got through, I just remember Mickey saying to Mary Lou. She said, "Well, I thought you all...!" Mickey said to her, "Look..." The only way we could help her with it is, I grab one arm and Mickey grab the other arm and carry him off the stage. There was nothing that we could do musically to be able to help... she thought we would be able to help whatever, but it was as strange and as new to us as it was to her.<sup>1319</sup>

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<sup>1315</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 May 2016).

<sup>1316</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1317</sup> Linda Dahl, "Embraceable You?: Mary Lou Williams and Cecil Taylor," *JazzTimes*, March 2000, 46.

<sup>1318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1319</sup> Ethan Iverson, "Interview with Bob Cranshaw."

Neither Cranshaw, nor Roker listened to the recording of the concert, called *Embraced*, because neither one thought it was worth hearing.<sup>1320</sup>

On October 17, 18 and 20, 1977, Cranshaw recorded sessions for Turk Mauro's album *The Underdog*. Cranshaw plays upright bass for the first time on record in several years and splits the bass duties with his adopted son and protege, Tom Barney. The notes say:

The first session includes Hugh Lawson, Bob Cranshaw and Ben Riley, while the second adds Al Cohn and substitutes Tom Barney, Cranshaw's son, for his father... Bob Cranshaw and Turk have been playing together for a long time and Cranshaw was even persuaded to pick up his acoustic bass for the date. He had been working on Fender lately, but his work on this session recalls his work with the MJT+3, Sonny Rollins, and countless other quality groups.<sup>1321</sup>

This was Barney's first ever recording and Cranshaw made a point of helping Barney as a professional bassist. Many of Barney's first professional experiences were with musicians that Cranshaw had a long history with. Barney talked about his early professional experiences in an interview with Chris Jisi. "my earliest gigs with jazz veterans like Stanley Turrentine, Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Buddy Rich, and [pianist] Walter Davis Jr."<sup>1322</sup>

On October 20, 1977 Cranshaw recorded two albums for the Storyville label.<sup>1323</sup> The rhythm section, which featured Cranshaw, Hugh Lawson and Ben Riley was the same on both records and was the same group that played on half of Turk Mauro's *The Underdog*.<sup>1324</sup> The two albums recorded on October 20 are Hugh Lawson's *Prime Time*

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<sup>1320</sup> Linda Dahl, "Embraceable You?: Mary Lou Williams and Cecil Taylor," 46.

<sup>1321</sup> Bob Porter, notes to Turk Mauro, *The Underdog*, (1977) LP, Storyville Records, SLP 4076.

<sup>1322</sup> Jisi, Chris. "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best," 33.

<sup>1323</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1324</sup> Ibid.

and Charlie Rouse's *Moment's Notice*. Cranshaw played upright bass on the sessions, the first time in several years that Cranshaw played upright bass on multiple sessions.<sup>1325</sup> The notes to *Prime Time* mention his transition.

It is a pleasure to hear Bob playing acoustic bass again. (Physical problems have forced him to become almost exclusively a fender player, albeit one of the best in the business.) His sound and attack have changed somewhat, but he is still rhythmically as strong as ever, and his choice of notes as always is impeccable.<sup>1326</sup>

On October 3-5, 1977 Cranshaw recorded with Walter Bishop Jr. and Al Foster for a compilation album called *I Remember Bebop* on Columbia records.<sup>1327</sup> The album features several groups each playing four pieces by bebop composers. Bishop's trio plays Charlie Parker compositions and Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on all four tracks.

In 1978 Cranshaw recorded on track for Bunky Green's album *Visions* on Vanguard records.<sup>1328</sup> The song "Visions" is an instrumental version of Stevie Wonder's "Visions." Cranshaw plays electric bass on the track. The album was Cranshaw's final of seven recordings on the Vanguard label.<sup>1329</sup>

Another session Cranshaw played on in 1978 that is undated, was led by Mike Longo, it is called *New York '78*.<sup>1330</sup> The album was not released until 1996 on Consolidated Artists Productions.<sup>1331</sup> The music is funky and Cranshaw plays electric bass for the entire album.

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<sup>1325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1326</sup> Horace Parlan, notes to Hugh Lawson, *Prime Time*, (1977) Storyville Records, SLP 4078.

<sup>1327</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1331</sup> Anonymous, notes to Mike Longo, *New York '78*, (1978, 1996) CD, Consolidated Artists Productions, CAP 915.

On June 21 1978, Cranshaw recorded with Walter Bishop Jr. for his Muse album *Cubicle*.<sup>1332</sup> Cranshaw plays on four of the six tracks on the album, the other two tracks feature bassist Mark Egan.<sup>1333</sup> A standout track is “Those Who Chant,” a song written as a tribute to Buddhist Chant.<sup>1334</sup>

On October 8 1978 Cranshaw played a concert at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco with Al Cohn and Zoot Sims.<sup>1335</sup> Each saxophone player was featured in separate sets and on two duets with the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Jimmy Rowles and drummer Mousey Alexander.<sup>1336</sup> Both sets are available to stream on Wolfgang’s vault.

In 1980 Cranshaw recorded tracks for Judy Collins album *Running for My Life* on Elektra Records.<sup>1337</sup> Cranshaw and Tom Barney split the bass chair for the album.<sup>1338</sup> Cranshaw toured with Collins around this time and affectionately called her “grandma.” Cranshaw had first worked with Collins when she appeared as a guest on *Sesame Street* in 1975, and on numerous appearances over the ensuing years.<sup>1339</sup>

In 1980 the Children's Television Workshop released an album of musical performances from Sesame street on Warner Brothers Records.<sup>1340</sup> The album featured performances from The Doobie Brothers, James Taylor, Carly Simon, Bette Midler, Al

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<sup>1332</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1334</sup> Brett Primack, notes to Walter Bishop Jr., *Cubicle*, (1978) LP, Muse Records, MR 5151.

<sup>1335</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1336</sup> Bill Milkowski, notes to Al Cohn, *Great American Music Hall*, (1978) Wolfgang’s Vault, <https://www.wolgangs.com/music/al-cohn/audio/20054236-50013.html?tid=49095086> accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1337</sup> Ron Wynn, “Bob Cranshaw Discography.”

<sup>1338</sup> Judy Collins, notes to Judy Collins, *Running for My Life*, (1980) LP, Elektra Records, 6E-253.

<sup>1339</sup> Michael Davis, *Street Gang: The Complete History of Sesame Street* (New York: Viking Press, 2008), 237-238.

<sup>1340</sup> Ron Wynn, “Bob Cranshaw Discography.”

Jarreau, Linda Ronstadt, Dr. John and George Benson. In 1981 a follow-up album was released featuring: Billy Joel, James Taylor, Lou Rawls, Janis Ian, Crystal Gayle, Dr. John, Kenny Loggins, Carly Simon and Bruce Springsteen. Both albums won Grammy awards for Best Recording for Children.<sup>13411342</sup>

In 1981 Cranshaw began playing with Lena Horne for her one-woman show on Broadway, *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music* and recorded on the album of the show's music in 1981.<sup>1343</sup> The show won a special Tony award in 1981<sup>1344</sup> and the album, produced by Quincy Jones, won two Grammy Awards in 1981 for Best Musical Show Album and Best Pop Vocal Performance, Female.<sup>1345</sup> Cranshaw played with Horne on tours of the show intermittently until 1984. The show was also broadcast on PBS in 1984 and received positive reviews.<sup>1346</sup>

In 1981 Cranshaw also played on Leon Redbone's album *From Branch to Branch* on Emerald City Records.<sup>1347</sup> According to the notes, Cranshaw plays on two tracks, "My Blue Heaven" and "When You Wish Upon a Star."<sup>1348</sup>

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<sup>1341</sup> Anonymous, "23rd Annual Grammy Awards, 1980"  
<https://www.grammy.com/grammys/awards/23rd-annual-grammy-awards-1980>, accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1342</sup> Anonymous, "25th Annual Grammy Awards, 1982"  
<https://www.grammy.com/grammys/awards/25th-annual-grammy-awards-1982>, accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1343</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1344</sup> Anonymous, "New York Drama Critics Circle: Past Awards,"  
[http://www.dramacritics.org/dc\\_pastawards.html#1981](http://www.dramacritics.org/dc_pastawards.html#1981), accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1345</sup> Anonymous, "24th Annual Grammy Awards, 1981"  
<https://www.grammy.com/grammys/awards/24th-annual-grammy-awards-1981>, accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1346</sup> John Leonard, "Television, Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music" *New York Magazine*, 10 December 1984, 84-85.

<sup>1347</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1348</sup> Anonymous, notes to Leon Redbone, *From Branch to Branch*, (1981) LP, Emerald City Records, EC38-136.



From December 1981 to January 1982 Cranshaw recorded with Yoshiaki Masuo for his 1982 album *Mellow Focus*.<sup>1349</sup> The bass sound on *Mellow Focus* is drastically different than on any of Cranshaw's other recordings. The bass has chorus and reverb, similar to Jaco Pastorious' sound around this period. Cranshaw plays on three tracks on the album, Will Lee and T.M. Stevens play on the other five tracks.

From December 9-15 Cranshaw recorded Sonny Rollins album *No Problem* on Milestone Records.<sup>1350</sup> *No Problem* brought Cranshaw back together with Tony Williams for the first time since Grachan Moncur's *Evolution* from 1963.<sup>1351</sup> This was the second and final time that Cranshaw recorded with Williams.<sup>1352</sup> The bass sound on some of the tracks on *No Problem* is similar to the sound on *Mellow Focus*, especially on the tracks "No Problem" and "Here You Come Again." It is difficult to distinguish exactly what is causing the bass sound, it may be a synth bass or some other combination of effects on Cranshaw's bass.

On June 24 1982 Cranshaw recorded with Jimmy McGriff for his album *The Groover* on Jazz American Marketing (JAM) Records.<sup>1353</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with McGriff since his 1975 album *Stump Juice*.<sup>1354</sup> The notes praise Cranshaw's contributions to the rhythm section, they say: "Bob Cranshaw has been so important to so many artists and recording sessions it makes you smile with confidence just to know he's around."<sup>1355</sup> This was Cranshaw's final recording with McGriff.<sup>1356</sup>

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<sup>1349</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1353</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1355</sup> Rick Petrone, notes to Jimmy McGriff, *The Groover*, (1982) LP, JAM Records, LP 009.

<sup>1356</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

In June of 1982 Cranshaw played a concert with Sonny Rollins at the Montreal Jazz Festival.<sup>1357</sup> The concert was recorded and released as *The Montreal Concert 1982* on the Gambit records label.<sup>1358</sup> The concert brought Jack DeJohnette and also introduced Bobby Broom to the band in addition to the regular guitarist Yoshiaki Masuo.<sup>1359</sup> The concert was also recorded as a video and is now available online.<sup>1360</sup> The bass sound has some of the effects, possibly reverb or chorus, that sound similar to Rollins' *No Problem* album, but the effects are less pronounced in the live concert than they are on the album. Bobby Broom recalled Cranshaw being supportive early on.

(He was) someone who was doing great things in music. He used to ask me to come with him to Saturday Night Live rehearsals. He asked on a handful of occasions. He'd say, "Come on down to NBC with me." and I'd say "Bob, I'm not going there with you! I can't even read music!" He'd say, "No, it doesn't matter, just come with me" He was doing something, and I think I just didn't feel prepared. I didn't trust my own ability and I think he did, way more than I did.<sup>1361</sup>

On July 22 Cranshaw recorded with saxophonist Arnold Sterling for his album *Here's Brother Sterling* on JAM records.<sup>1362</sup> Also on the session was Junior Mance, who Cranshaw had not recorded live with Mance since 1964.<sup>1363</sup><sup>1364</sup> The notes to *Here's Brother Sterling* incorrectly list the bassist as Jimmy Johnson, however, Johnson plays

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<sup>1357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1360</sup> Anonymous, "Sonny Rollins Montreal 1982,"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M2uoTj8nMQ>, accessed 8 March 2020.

<sup>1361</sup> Bobby Broom, personal telephone interview (Evanston, IL and Greeley, CO 17 November 2019)

<sup>1362</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1364</sup> Cranshaw is on Mance's 1972 album *That Lovin' Feeling*, but Mance's piano was pre-recorded.

drums on the album and Cranshaw plays electric bass.<sup>1365</sup> The bass sound is heavily processed, and sounds almost like a synth bass.

From August 17-22 Cranshaw recorded with Sonny Rollins In Berkeley for his album *Reel Life* on Milestone records.<sup>1366</sup> This album featured both guitarists Broom and Masuo, it was Masuo's final recording with Rollins Band. Cranshaw also overdubbed percussion on the track "Rosita's Best Friend" in addition to playing bass on the track.<sup>1367</sup> Cranshaw's sound is natural on some tracks and has heavy effects on others.

In 1984 Cranshaw played on one track of a Thelonious Monk tribute album called *That's the Way I Feel Now*.<sup>1368</sup> The double album featured several groups reinterpreting Monk's compositions. The group Cranshaw played in featured pop singer and pianist Joe Jackson as well as three clarinets and a string orchestra.<sup>1369</sup> The album was conceived by producer and SNL music coordinator Hal Wilner who wanted to present Monk's influence on jazz musicians and non-jazz musicians as well.<sup>1370</sup>

In 1985 Cranshaw played on two tracks for Bennie Wallace's album *Twilight Time* on Blue Note Records.<sup>1371</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded for Blue Note since Horace Silver's *Silver N' Brass* in 1975.<sup>1372</sup><sup>1373</sup> The tracks Cranshaw played on featured Dr. John,

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<sup>1365</sup> Arnold Sterling and Esmond Edwards, notes to Arnold Sterling, *Here's Brother Sterling*, (1982) LP, JAM Records, JAM 010.

<sup>1366</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1367</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Reel Life*, (1982) LP, Milestone Records, M9108.

<sup>1368</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1369</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1370</sup> Robert Palmer, "Pop Life; New Interpreters of Monk Works," *The New York Times*, 13 June 1984, C 26.

<sup>1371</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1372</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1373</sup> Blue Note continued to issue previously unreleased material that featured Cranshaw between 1975 and 1985.

Bernard Purdie, John Scofield and Stevie Ray Vaughan.<sup>1374</sup> It was Cranshaw's last time recording with Dr. John and his only recording with Stevie Ray Vaughan.<sup>1375</sup>

On May 17, 1985 Cranshaw recorded an album with Milt Jackson and "His Gold Medal Winners" (it is unclear what medal the title refers to) called *Brother Jim* for the Pablo label.<sup>1376</sup> The band consisted of Cranshaw, Jackson, Cedar Walton, Joe Pass, Mickey Roker, Jimmy Heath and Harold Vick.<sup>1377</sup> Cranshaw had extensive prior performing and recording experience with all members of the ensemble. This rhythm section of Cranshaw, Walton and Roker had not recorded together since Walton's 1969 album *The Electric Boogaloo Song*.<sup>1378</sup> Cranshaw and Roker had not recorded together since Williams failed *Embraced* album and since Cranshaw began playing with Roker in 1962, he had not had such a long gap in a recording together.<sup>1379</sup> This album is also the only time that Cranshaw recorded with Joe Pass.<sup>1380</sup> Cranshaw plays upright bass on the album. In 1986 Jackson's groups played at the Village Vanguard with Cranshaw, Cedar Walton and Kenny Washington.<sup>1381</sup> Cranshaw played electric bass for the Village Vanguard performances.<sup>1382</sup>

On August 19, 1986 Cranshaw performed in Saugerties, New York with Sonny Rollins. The concert was filmed for the film *Saxophone Colossus* and also released as the album *G-Man*.<sup>1383</sup> The group included Cranshaw, Rollins, Rollins' nephew Clifton

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<sup>1374</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1375</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1376</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1381</sup> Jon Pareles, "Jazz: Milt Jackson's Quartet," *The New York Times*, 29 May 1986, C 16.

<sup>1382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1383</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Anderson on trombone, (his first recording with the group) Mark Soskin, (his first recording with Rollins) and Marvin “Smitty” Smith (also his first recording with Rollins.)<sup>1384</sup> The film includes interviews with Rollins, his wife Lucille and several other people that were involved with his career throughout his life.<sup>1385</sup>

A slightly different group led by Rollins performed on the Circle Line Cruise line in New York on August 23, 1986. The performance was bootlegged and shared by Brett Primack, (the “Jazz Video Guy”) on YouTube.<sup>1386</sup> The group for this performance included Cranshaw, Rollins, Bobby Broom, Mark Soskin, Al Foster and special guest Tommy Flanagan.<sup>1387</sup> On this recording Cranshaw plays some slap bass, a very unusual technique for him to use.

In 1986 Cranshaw recorded three tracks with Monty Alexander and Bucky Pizzarelli for Alexander’s album *To Not, With Love*, on Zanda Records. The majority of the album consists of live recordings from a week Alexander played at the Blue Note in December of 1986, Cranshaw was not a member of the band for those performances.<sup>1388</sup> The three tracks featuring Cranshaw are available on the LP issue of the album, not on the CD release, which only has selections from the live group at the Blue Note.<sup>1389</sup>

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<sup>1384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1385</sup> Robert Mugge, *Sonny Rollins: Saxophone Colossus* [1986], DVD, Mug-Shot Productions; Winstar Home Entertainment, (1998)

<sup>1386</sup> Brett Primack, “Sonny Rollins Takes a Boat Ride,” <https://youtu.be/yH8nLAQ2e6c>, accessed 9 March 2020.

<sup>1387</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1388</sup> Ira Gitler, John S. Wilson and Monty Alexander, notes to Monty Alexander, *To Nat, With Love*, (1987) LP, Zanda Records, Z87001.

<sup>1389</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: Monty Alexander” *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=4833> Accessed 9 March 2020.

In 1987 Cranshaw recorded and with Blossom Dearie for her album *Songs of Chelsea, Volume X* on Daffodil Records.<sup>1390</sup> The album features Cranshaw, Dearie, Jay Berliner and Jay Leonhart (on vocals, not bass.) Cranshaw had never recorded with any of the musicians on this album before.<sup>1391</sup> Dearie praises her accompanists in the notes to the album, she wrote: “World-class guitarist Jay Berliner... and the unsurpassed Bob Cranshaw on bass provide the state-of-the-art amalgam for all but three of these songs.”<sup>1392</sup>

In 1988 Cranshaw recorded one track with Dianne Schuur for the 1988 *GRP Christmas Collection*.<sup>1393</sup> The album is a collection of Christmas music from 15 different GRP artists. Cranshaw plays electric bass on “The Christmas Song.”<sup>1394</sup> This is Cranshaw’s only recording with Schuur.<sup>1395</sup>

In 1988 Cranshaw recorded a session for Jamey Aebersold’s play along series *Blues in All Keys: Volume 42*.<sup>1396</sup> The rhythm section on the session was Cranshaw, James Williams and Mickey Roker.<sup>1397</sup> The bass lines that Cranshaw played were also transcribed and published in a separate book.<sup>1398</sup> The introduction by Phil Bailey also includes a listing of Cranshaw’s current work which says:

In recent years he hasn’t travelled as much as in the past, working Broadway shows such as Jesus Christ Superstar and Lena Horne’s one lady show as well as jazz dates in New York. But he still travels occasionally with Milt

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<sup>1390</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1392</sup> Blossom Dearie and George Bean, notes to Blossom Dearie, *Songs of Chelsea, Volume X*, (1987) LP, Daffodil Records, BMD110.

<sup>1393</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1394</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1398</sup> Fred Boaden, *Bob Cranshaw Bass Lines: Exactly as Recorded Transcribed by Fred Boaden*. New Albany, IN Jamey Aebersold, 1988.

Jackson or Sonny Rollins, and sometimes with such singers as Frank Sinatra, Liza Minelli and Charles Aznavour.<sup>1399</sup>

There is no record in either of Cranshaw's discographies of him recording with Sinatra, Minelli or Aznavour so this introduction provides a valuable historical perspective.

On March 10, 1988 Cranshaw recorded a session with Lionel Hampton for his album *Mostly Blues* on Musicmasters Records.<sup>1400</sup> Cranshaw plays on half of the album, the other bassist is Anthony Jackson.<sup>1401</sup> The notes compliment the rhythm section, they say:

His stellar accompanists provide a fascinating backdrop for Hampton's ever stimulating solo flights... The rhythm section of (Bobby) Scott, Joe Beck, Bob Cranshaw and Grady Tate digs in and helps Hamp take this one home in style.<sup>1402</sup>

On March 6, 8 and 10, 1989, Cranshaw recorded with Maurice Hines for his album *I've Never Been In Love Before* on Arbors records.<sup>1403</sup> The session was not released in 1989 but was combined with a separate session from April 28, 2000 and was released in 2000.<sup>1404</sup> Cranshaw had worked with the Hines, Hines and Dad act off and on since the mid-1960s, but this was his first recording with any of the Hines family.

On June 30 1989, Cranshaw recorded a session with the Contemporary Piano Ensemble for the album *Four Pianos for Phineas* on Somethin' Else Records.<sup>1405</sup> The ensemble consisted of Geoff Keezer, Harold Mabern, James Williams and Mulgrew

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<sup>1399</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>1400</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1401</sup> Teo Macero, notes to Lionel Hampton, *Mostly Blues*, (1988) CD, Musicmasters Records, CIJD60168K.

<sup>1402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1403</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1404</sup> Will Friedwald, notes to Maurice Hines, *I've Never Been in Love Before*, (2000) CD, Arbors Records, ARCD19240.

<sup>1405</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Miller, backed by “the very capable assistance of...”<sup>1406</sup> Cranshaw and Billy Higgins.<sup>1407</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Higgins since 1973, and this was their final recording together.<sup>1408</sup> This was the only time Cranshaw recorded with Keezer or Miller.<sup>1409</sup>

In July of 1989 Cranshaw recorded with Larry Willis for his album *Just In Time* on Steeplechase records.<sup>1410</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Willis since Jackie McLean’s *Right Now!* In 1965.<sup>1411</sup> This was also Cranshaw’s first time recording with drummer Kenny Washington.<sup>1412</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on *Just in Time*. This was Cranshaw’s first recording on Steeplechase.

On August 5 and September 9 1989 Cranshaw recorded two sessions for Sonny Rollins album *Falling in Love With Love* on Milestone Records.<sup>1413</sup> Cranshaw plays on four of the six tracks on the album, all on electric bass.<sup>1414</sup> This was the first time Jerome Harris, who subbed for Cranshaw in Rollins’ band on electric bass, had recorded with Cranshaw.<sup>1415</sup> Harris considered Cranshaw’s role as an electric bassist with Rollins largely responsible for his ability to join Rollins' group.<sup>1416</sup> Harris said that since he did not play acoustic bass, if Cranshaw had not set the precedent for electric bass as a valid jazz instrument, he would not have had many of his most important opportunities.<sup>1417</sup>

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<sup>1406</sup> James Williams and Scott Yanow, notes to Contemporary Piano Ensemble, *Four Pianos For Phineas*, (1989, 1996) CD, Somethin’ Else Records, TOCJ-5528.

<sup>1407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1408</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1415</sup> Tom Lord, “TJD-Online: Sonny Rollins” *The Jazz Discography Online*.

<sup>1416</sup> Jerome Harris, personal interview (New York, NY: 26 November 2019).

<sup>1417</sup> Ibid.



On December 21 1989 Cranshaw recorded with Paul Bley for his album *Bebop* on Steeplechase Records.<sup>1418</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Bley since an abandoned 1964 session with Sonny Rollins and the only other opportunity to hear Cranshaw with Bley is *Sonny Meets Hawk*.<sup>1419</sup> The album was rated four stars in *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD* and the review also said: “This is one of the finest piano-trio records of the last ten years - or the next, depending on how you view its revisionism.”<sup>1420</sup> The review also praises Cranshaw’s solo on “My Little Suede Shoes,” saying: “...Cranshaw’s solo is superb.”<sup>1421</sup>

In 1990 Cranshaw recorded with Stanley Cowell for his album *Departure #2* on the Steeplechase label.<sup>1422</sup> Cranshaw had worked with Cowell on Jimmy Heath’s *Love and Understanding* in 1973 and Keith Copeland was the drummer on Paul Bley’s *Bebop*.<sup>1423</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on the album.

On March 22, 1990 Cranshaw recorded with trumpeter Louis Smith for his album *Ballads for Lulu* on Steeplechase. Cranshaw had never recorded with Smith before nor the date’s pianist Jim McNeely.<sup>1424</sup> The drummer was Keith Copeland, who played on all three of the Steeplechase albums that Cranshaw recorded.<sup>1425</sup> This was Cranshaw’s final album on Steeplechase.<sup>1426</sup>

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<sup>1418</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1420</sup> Richard Cook, and Brian Morton, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*, 168.

<sup>1421</sup> Ibid, 168.

<sup>1422</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1423</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1424</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1426</sup> Ibid.

In the spring of 1990 Cranshaw travelled to Japan for a tour called 100 Gold Fingers, that consisted of ten pianists and one rhythm section. The tour was the brainchild of Harold Mabern, and the tour became a series that continued for many years and featured a rotating cast of pianist that at time includes Mabern, Hank Jones, Lynn Arriale (Bernstein,) Kenny Barron, Junior Mance, Tommy Flanagan, Cedar Walton, Monty Alexander, Roger Kellaway, Ray Bryant, John Lewis, Dave McKenna, Duke Jordan, Marian McPartland, Don Friedman, Eric Reed, Benny Green, Cyrus Chestnut, James Williams, Geri Allen and Mal Waldron.<sup>1427</sup> The series released albums of selected songs recorded live during concerts, they are: *100 Gold Fingers* on All Art Records in 1990, *100 Gold Fingers: Piano Playhouse '93* on Absord Records in 1993, and *Fujitsu Presents 100 Gold Fingers Piano Playhouse 2001* on Pony Canyon Records in 2001.<sup>1428</sup> There are some video excerpts of these concerts available online as well.<sup>14291430</sup>

On June 25, 1990, Cranshaw recorded a session with Joe Williams for his Verve album, *That Holiday Feelin'*.<sup>1431</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on four tracks on the, the other bassist is Paul West.<sup>1432</sup> Cranshaw had not recorded with Williams since 1964 and this would be their final recording together.<sup>1433</sup> Norman Simmons plays piano on the

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<sup>1427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1429</sup> Anonymous, "100 Gold Fingers Piano"

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBgH6PuoIP-sLAvgvCVw6WhE46OLZwODa>, accessed 9 March 2020.

<sup>1430</sup> Anonymous, "Kenny Barron Solo and Trio"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vofXNZPn4ow>, accessed 9 March 2020

<sup>1431</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1433</sup> Ibid.

album, Cranshaw had not recorded with Simmons since the 1961 Carmen McRae album *Sings Lover Man and Other Billie Holiday Classics*.<sup>1434</sup>

On November 24, 1990 Cranshaw recorded with a relatively unknown saxophonist Amani A.W. Murray for his self-titled album.<sup>1435</sup> The album was recorded when Murray was 14 years old and the album indicated a promising career.<sup>1436</sup> Murray never made another recording according to TJD.<sup>1437</sup>

On December 7, 1990, Cranshaw recorded with Nashville pianist Beegie Adair for her album *Escape to New York* on Consolidated Artists Productions.<sup>1438</sup> The album was produced by pianist Mike Longo and featured a 20-year-old Gregory Hutchinson on drums.<sup>1439</sup> This was the only time Cranshaw recorded with Adair or Hutchinson.<sup>1440</sup>

On December 10 and 11, 1990, Cranshaw recorded with Milt Jackson for his album *The Harem* on Musicmasters Records.<sup>1441</sup> The album also featured Cedar Walton, Kenny Washington,<sup>1442</sup> James Moody on flute and Jimmy Heath on soprano and tenor saxophones. Jackson says in the liner notes that the musicians were some of his favorites. He said:

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<sup>1434</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1435</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1436</sup> Jack Fuller, "Amani A.W. Murray" *Chicago Tribune*, 21 July 1991, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1991-07-21-9103210358-story.html>, accessed 9 March 2020.

<sup>1437</sup> Tom Lord, "TJD-Online: Amani A.W. Murray" *The Jazz Discography Online*. <https://www-lordisco-com.unco.idm.oclc.org/tjd/MusicianDetail?mid=241&rid=42> Accessed 9 March 2020.

<sup>1438</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1439</sup> Mike Longo, notes to Beegie Adair, *Escape to New York*, (1990) CD, Consolidated Artists Productions, CAP790.

<sup>1440</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1441</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1442</sup> Ibid.

Cedar Walton is my own personal favorite pianist; he is so greatly complemented by Kenny Washington on the drums and all musicians love the steady beat of Bob Cranshaw.<sup>1443</sup>

*The Harem* was Cranshaw's final recording with both James Moody and Cedar Walton.<sup>1444</sup>

## Part XII: 1991 – 2016

On April 13 of 1991 Rollins played a concert at Carnegie Hall that featured Cranshaw, Jim Hall, Al Foster and trumpeter Roy Hargrove.<sup>1445</sup> This was the first time that Cranshaw and Hall had worked together since 1971.<sup>1446</sup> Rollins band also played the Jazz a Vienne Festival the same year on July 5.<sup>1447</sup> The group at the Jazz a Vienne Festival was Rollins, Mark Soskin, Jerome Harris, Cranshaw and Victor See Yuen. Cranshaw recorded several sessions with Sonny Rollins and a band similar to the group from the Jazz a Vienne Festival, on August 10, 17, 24 and 27, for his album *Here's to the People*, on Milestone Records.<sup>1448</sup> On two tracks, Roy Hargrove joined Rollins' regular group, this was the first time Cranshaw recorded with Hargrove.<sup>1449</sup> Rollins dedicated a song on the album to Hargrove, "Young Roy."<sup>1450</sup> Jim Hall is not on the album and Al

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<sup>1443</sup> Milt Jackson, notes to Milt Jackson, *The Harem*, (1990) CD, Musicmasters Records, 5061-2-C.

<sup>1444</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1445</sup> Peter Watrous, "Jazz: Sonny Rollins' Anatomical Attack on Tunes," *The New York Times*, 15 April 1991, C 11.

<sup>1446</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1447</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 a 2019"

[https://www.jazzavienne.com/sites/jazzavienne/files/memoires/programmation\\_jazz\\_a\\_vienne\\_1980\\_2019.pdf](https://www.jazzavienne.com/sites/jazzavienne/files/memoires/programmation_jazz_a_vienne_1980_2019.pdf), accessed 9 March 2020.

<sup>1448</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1450</sup> Ibid.

Foster splits the drum chair with Steve Jordan.<sup>1451</sup> Jerome Harris recalled the comfort he felt playing with Cranshaw and recognizing how well he was able to accompany Rollins.

It was very comfortable for me. All the time every single gig, there was never any problem. His tempo was real steady and there'd be nice voice leading, note choices. All the time, real flow to his lines. And he gave Sonny what he wanted. I realized at some point; Sonny wanted a certain type of accompaniment. And he wanted it to be accompaniment. He didn't want anyone, except the drummer, for the bass drums and piano, he didn't want our ideas to be too intrusive or too leading him harmonically or rhythmically. There were times I remember playing with him and he would do something, maybe a wave behind him, like get off my tail. That was my signal like "Maybe I'm being a little too intrusive, playing too much or leading the harmony in some way that's getting in the way of his freedom to do what he is hearing." I never got the feeling that Bob was getting in his way. There were times that I got in his way and I'd have to change what I was doing. But Bob always knew what to do to make Sonny feel comfortable. Which of course is one of the main jobs, maybe the main job of the side person. Certainly, when I was comping or soloing Bob made me feel comfortable and it was nice to just comp with Bob for Sonny or Clifton or Soskin. I tried to take Bob as a model when I was playing bass in the band.<sup>1452</sup>

Between sessions with Rollins, on August 13, Cranshaw recorded a session with Ruth Brown for her album *Fine and Mellow* on Fantasy Records.<sup>1453</sup> The album is a tribute to Billie Holiday and the music was arranged by Frank Owens.<sup>1454</sup> Cranshaw plays on four tracks and splits the bass duties with Al McKibbin.<sup>1455</sup> Cranshaw plays electric and upright bass on the album.<sup>1456</sup> Owens admired Cranshaw's abilities, and requested him for the session.

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<sup>1451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1452</sup> Jerome Harris, personal interview (New York, NY 26 November 2020)

<sup>1453</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1454</sup> Anonymous, notes to Ruth Brown, *Fine and Mellow*, (1991) CD, Fantasy Records, FCD-9663-2.

<sup>1455</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1456</sup> Ibid.

Bob knew everything. He knew all the tunes. When we would do club dates, I wouldn't even have to tell him what tune I was playing. I would just play the first few bars and he would just chime in. He was like that.<sup>1457</sup>

In October of 1991, Cranshaw performed in Japan with Sonny Rollins.<sup>1458</sup> One performance on October 15 was filmed for Japanese television.<sup>1459</sup> The band featured Cranshaw, Rollins, Mark Soskin, Jerome Harris and Al Foster.<sup>1460</sup> Mark Soskin recalled that Cranshaw brought a special dynamic to Rollins' groups.

It was great to be a part of history. Just being associated with someone like Cranshaw was a big deal. He was extremely versatile and well respected. His memorial had tons of bass players there. He was definitely the right guy for Sonny. Sonny loved what he did. And I can understand it. Out of all the bass players that I played with Sonny, the one that stood out was Cranshaw. He was someone you could rely on when things got weird on stage.<sup>1461</sup>

Soskin remembered a challenging event playing with Rollins that Cranshaw during which helped him.

I remember specifically, playing a gig at the Bottom Line. We were playing and it was packed, it was summer, the Air Conditioning broke and there were a lot of famous piano players in the audience. Early in the gig, Sonny called this one tune that nobody knew. Somehow, I was able to listen to Bob play and get through that tune. The tune was in Gb and later on he (Rollins) would play everything in Gb. It was one of those times where I could at least count on Bob to be someone I could go to when things got weird. He really was a mentor to a lot of people. He was very generous in his music.<sup>1462</sup>

On November 14 and 15, 1991, Cranshaw recorded two sessions for vocalist Trudy Desmond's album *Tailor Made* on The Jazz Alliance label.<sup>1463</sup> Pianist Roger

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<sup>1457</sup> Frank Owens, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Stanford, CA 1 August 2019)

<sup>1458</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1459</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1461</sup> Mark Soskin, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 3 December 2020)

<sup>1462</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1463</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Kellaway, who had been a member of the inaugural 100 Gold Fingers tour in 1990 arranged the music and played on the sessions.<sup>1464</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on the album. Kellaway recalled that Cranshaw added a special dimension to any musical situation. “Any given situation, any opportunity that anyone ever had to meet Bobby, or to play with Bobby, was a pleasant musical experience. He was wonderful. He was a great bass player.”<sup>1465</sup>

In 1992 Cranshaw played a concert in Munich at the Philharmonic Hall with Sonny Rollins.<sup>1466</sup> The band included Cranshaw, Rollins, Mark Soskin, Jerome Harris, Clifton Anderson and Yoron Israel.<sup>1467</sup> Clifton Anderson recalled how supportive Cranshaw was when he first joined Rollins’ group.

For me personally, Bob was very helpful to me when I first joined Sonny’s band. I had known Bob prior to joining Sonny but only because I would come hang around rehearsals sometimes. I had met him, but I didn’t really get to know him until we started working together in Sonny’s group and when I first got in there with Sonny, I was a young guy. I didn’t know what was going on. Sonny was playing so much saxophone and his direction, musical direction I was not really clear on it. Because the only reference I had were these old records of Sonny Rollins with J.J. Johnson. Of course, those were old records and Sonny’s playing had changed dramatically. In terms of concept there was no other place. I didn’t have a reference really. Bob provided me some guidance through that whole period. I would go to Bob and say “Sonny’s playing so much saxophone. What am I supposed to play? What am I supposed to do?” I think the whole first year that I was with Sonny, I didn’t know what to do. But I really appreciate Bob being there. It was a blessing for me because he would help through. I would get frustrated and almost depressed. Thinking “What am I doing here?” and not really understanding. At that point Sonny wasn’t giving me direction. I had worked with a lot of great musicians to that point, but I was used to musicians giving me some lead sheets. Stuff like that. Sonny would play a

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<sup>1464</sup> Peter Matz, notes to Trudy Desmond, *Tailor Made*, (1992) CD, The Jazz Alliance, TJA10015.

<sup>1465</sup> Roger Kellaway, personal telephone interview (Los Angeles, CA and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>1466</sup> Anonymous, “Sonny Rollins Sextet Live in Munich (1992),” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qflbtEGZR8>, accessed 10 March 2020.

<sup>1467</sup> Ibid.

lot of these old obscure tunes and I didn't know these tunes I didn't know the music. Some of these tunes I'd never heard of. He expected me to be able to pick those tunes up. Of course, Bob knew those tunes so Bob would help guide me through.<sup>1468</sup>

In late June of 1993 Cranshaw played a series of performances at Birdland in New York with a group led by Seldon Powell, which were recorded and released as Powell's final album, *End Play*.<sup>1469</sup> With Cranshaw on the album are Barry Harris, Clark Terry and Mickey Roker.<sup>1470</sup> Cranshaw had recorded extensively with all of the musicians on the label, including Powell several times.<sup>1471</sup> both as sidemen as far back as 1963. This is Cranshaw's final recording with Barry Harris.<sup>1472</sup>

In July and August of 1993 Cranshaw recorded for a Sonny Rollins album called *Old Flames*.<sup>1473</sup> *Old Flames* album featured Cranshaw, Rollins, Clifton Anderson, Tommy Flanagan and Jack DeJohnette backed on two tracks by a brass choir.<sup>1474</sup> The brass choir was arranged and conducted by Jimmy Heath.<sup>1475</sup> Cranshaw plays upright and acoustic basses on the album.

On July 1, 1994, Cranshaw played the Jazz a Vienne Festival with Sonny Rollins' group for a second time.<sup>1476</sup> The band included Rollins, Cranshaw, Jerome Harris, Billy Drummond, Clifton Anderson and Victor See Yuen.<sup>1477</sup> Rollins band with the same members also played at the 1994 Monterey Jazz Festival on September 18.<sup>1478</sup> One song

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<sup>1468</sup> Clifton Anderson, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

<sup>1469</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1470</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1471</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1472</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1473</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1474</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1475</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Old Flames*, (1993) CD, MCD9215-2.

<sup>1476</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 a 2019."

<sup>1477</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1478</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."



from Rollins' group's performance, "Keep Hold of Yourself," was recorded and included on an album called *Monterey Jazz Festival - 40 Legendary Years*.<sup>1479</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on this recording.

On July 25, 1994, Cranshaw played at the Pori Jazz festival in Finland with the Riverside Reunion Band, a group that was conceived by the label's original producer, Orrin Keepnews.<sup>1480</sup> Cranshaw was joined by Nat Adderley, Jimmy Heath, Buddy Montgomery, Tommy Flanagan and Albert "Tootie" Heath.<sup>1481</sup> The concert was recorded live and released as an album called *Hi-Fly* on Milestone records.<sup>1482</sup> This was the only time Cranshaw recorded with Buddy Montgomery.<sup>1483</sup> Each soloist plays one selection alone with the rhythm section, the rest of the album is the full ensemble.<sup>1484</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on the album.

Cranshaw recorded a session in late 1994<sup>1485</sup> for Debbie Gibson's album *For Better or Worse*.<sup>1486</sup> He played on the first track of the album, "For Better or Worse," with Steve Jordan on drums.<sup>1487</sup> Cranshaw told *Downbeat*'s Jay Weisser that he played an electric upright bass on the session.

Cranshaw occasionally plays a Carruthers upright electric bass, a narrow, fretless, strange-looking instrument that he used most recently in a late 1994 studio gig with pop singer Debbie Gibson. "The upright electric has a different character... The notes ring long, but they sound electronic, although a little deeper than with a bass guitar."<sup>1488</sup>

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<sup>1479</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1480</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to The Riverside Reunion Band, *Hi-Fly*, (1993) CD, Milestone Records, MCD9228-2.

<sup>1481</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1482</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1484</sup> Orrin Keepnews, notes to The Riverside Reunion Band, *Hi-Fly*.

<sup>1485</sup> Jay Weiser, "Bob Cranshaw's Search for the Perfect Bass." *Downbeat*, May 1995, 62.

<sup>1486</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>1487</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1488</sup> Jay Weiser, "Bob Cranshaw's Search for the Perfect Bass."

In 1995 Cranshaw recorded for Valerie Capers album *Come on Home* on Columbia Records.<sup>1489</sup> Cranshaw plays on four tracks on the album, he plays upright bass on all of them.<sup>1490</sup> Wynton Marsalis and Paquito D’Rivera are also on the recording, it is Cranshaw’s only recording with either of them.<sup>1491</sup>

On January 30 and 31, 1995, Cranshaw recorded with Clifton Anderson for his debut album, *Landmarks*, on Milestone Records.<sup>1492</sup> Most of the group was borrowed from Rollins’ groups and the Rollins alumni included Cranshaw, Victor See Yuen, (who also co-produced the album,) and Al Foster, with the addition of Wallace Roney, Kenny Garrett and Monty Alexander.<sup>1493</sup> This was Cranshaw’s first recording with Kenny Garrett and his only recording with Wallace Roney.<sup>1494</sup>

On May 16 and 29 1995 Cranshaw recorded with Japanese vibraphonist Takashi Ohi for his album *Time Stream* on Denon Records.<sup>1495</sup> The rhythm section was Cranshaw, Junior Mance and Grady Tate.<sup>1496</sup> Cranshaw had played with both men on separate occasions but the three had never recorded together as a rhythm section.<sup>1497</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on the album, which was only released in Japan.<sup>1498</sup>

On August 30 and October 7, 1995, Cranshaw recorded two sessions with Sonny Rollins for his album *Sonny Rollins +3* on Milestone Records.<sup>1499</sup> The album was unique

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<sup>1489</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1491</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1492</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1493</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1498</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1499</sup> Ibid.

for Rollins during this period, in that he did not use his regular touring band, instead recording with Cranshaw, Stephen Scott and Jack DeJohnette for two tracks and Tommy Flanagan and Al Foster for the other five tracks.<sup>1500</sup> Despite the traditional format of the rhythm section, Cranshaw plays electric bass for the entire album.<sup>1501</sup> Cranshaw did occasionally switch back to upright bass in performances with Rollins (for example on Rollins 1991 Carnegie Hall concert Cranshaw played upright bass for half of the concert) and Cranshaw regularly performed and recorded on upright throughout the 1990's, so it is surprising that he did not play an upright on this very straight-ahead album. Rollins' group played the Olympia Theatre in Paris, in October of 1996 with Cranshaw, Stephen Scott, Clifton Anderson, Victor See Yuen and new drummer Harold Sumney Jr.

In 1995 Cranshaw toured with the 100 Gold Fingers series and a portion of one concert was filmed for Japanese television.<sup>1502</sup> The band in the film included Cranshaw, Cedar Walton and Grady Tate.<sup>1503</sup>

In May of 1996 Cranshaw performed at the Jazz a Liege festival in Belgium with Milt Jackson's group.<sup>1504</sup> The band featured Cranshaw, Jackson, Mike LeDonne and Mickey Roker.<sup>1505</sup> The performance was filmed for Belgian television.<sup>1506</sup>

In September of 1996, Cranshaw played bass on five tracks of tubist Howard Johnson's album *Gravity!!!*.<sup>1507</sup> Cranshaw had previously played with Johnson, both as a

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<sup>1500</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1501</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Sonny Rollins +3*, (1995) CD, Milestone Records, MCD9250-2.

<sup>1502</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1503</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1504</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1505</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1507</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

sidemen, in groups led by Buddy Rich and Hank Mobley.<sup>1508</sup> The album features tuba ensembles with up to seven tubists and arrangements by Johnson.<sup>1509</sup> The rhythm section is Cranshaw with either Paul Schaffer or Raymond Chew on piano and Kenwood Dennard on drums.<sup>1510</sup>

On December 18 and 19, 1996, Cranshaw recorded with saxophonist Scott Hamilton for his album *After Hours* on Concord Jazz.<sup>1511</sup> The album features Cranshaw, Tommy Flanagan and Lewis Nash in the rhythm section.<sup>1512</sup> This was Cranshaw's only time recording with Hamilton and his first of several recordings with Nash.<sup>1513</sup>

In 1997 Cranshaw recorded with Milt Jackson for the album *Sa Va Bella (For Lady Legends)* on Warner Brothers Records.<sup>1514</sup> The album brought Cranshaw and Roker back together on record for the first time in four years and pianist Mike LeDonne was added to Jackson's rhythm section.<sup>1515</sup> LeDonne recalled joining the group and how supportive Cranshaw was from the beginning.

I know that when James Williams, James is the one who recommended me to play (with Milt Jackson), I was supposed to go sub for James on a gig in Philly. Milt Jackson knew my name, but he didn't really know me very well. But Bob is the one who had seen me coming to all their gigs. I would come every night to the Vanguard and sit in the same seat and he knew who I was. He was the one who pushed Bags into giving me a chance. He said, "He's the guy who comes every night. I know he knows all the tunes, so let's give him a try." Then I went down to Philly and we played a place called Jewel's which was a funky little place. I did a weekend at Jewel's and that's where I met Bob, Mickey and Bags for the first time... Immediately when I went to the gig at Jewel's with Milt, I was nervous. But Bob's kind face, his

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<sup>1508</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1509</sup> Anonymous, notes to Howard Johnson, *Gravity!!!*, (1995) CD, Verve Records, 314-531-021-2.

<sup>1510</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1511</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1513</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1515</sup> Ibid.

beautiful smile, just beaming at me, put me at ease. Even though I thought I wasn't doing the greatest job. To me it was Cedar Walton's chair that I was replacing. So, the pressure was incredible to try and reach that level with the guys that knew the difference, for sure. All night long I felt like "I'm not making it. I'm not living up to what they want. I suck." But Bob and Mickey too, they immediately came onboard. Within a couple of tunes, they were smiling at me.<sup>1516</sup>

Three tracks on *Sa Va Bella* also feature vocalist Etta Jones, who Cranshaw had never recorded with.<sup>1517</sup> Around this time, Cranshaw began playing a solid body electric upright bass that was custom made by David Gage String Instruments.<sup>1518</sup> In a 2001 *JazzTimes* interview Cranshaw talked about having it made specifically for playing with Jackson, and named the instrument "The Milt." He said:

I also have a collapsible upright electric bass that David Gage made for me... I had it made to play with Bags (Jackson)... I played the pork chop (electric bass) for a while, but with the vibes, I felt like the string bass went better with that instrument... I've recorded with it... and it really records great.<sup>1519</sup>

*Sa Va Bella* may have been the first recording Cranshaw made on "The Milt."

In 1997 Cranshaw recorded with guitarist David O'Rourke for his album *The Prize* on Nigh Town records.<sup>1520</sup> Joining Cranshaw and O'Rourke were Larry Willis and Al Harewood.<sup>1521</sup> *The Prize* was Cranshaw's first recording with Harewood since 1963, and despite the success of *Idle Moments* they had only played together on two records prior to *The Prize*, both from late 1963.<sup>1522</sup>

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<sup>1516</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>1517</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1518</sup> Jisi, Chris. "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best," 36.

<sup>1519</sup> Chip Stern, "Bob Cranshaw: Shop Talk" *JazzTimes*, April 2001, 135.

<sup>1520</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1522</sup> Ibid.

In 1997 a German director, Julian Benedikt, filmed a documentary about the Blue Note record label.<sup>1523</sup> Cranshaw is interviewed for the film and appears on camera several times.<sup>1524</sup>

On January 7 and February 28 1998 with Sonny Rollins for his album *Global Warming* on Milestone Records.<sup>1525</sup> The album features Cranshaw and Rollins with regular band members Stephen Scott, Clifton Anderson and Victor See Yuen as well as guest drummer Idris Muhammad and new regular drummer Perry Wilson.<sup>1526</sup> On June 29, 1999, the same group from the recording *Global Warming* performed at the Jazz à Vienne Festival with Rollins, Cranshaw, Clifton Anderson, Stephen Scott, Victor See Yuen and Perry Wilson.<sup>1527</sup> The same group also appeared at the April Jazz Espoo Festival in Finland. The concert in Finland was filmed for Finnish television.<sup>1528</sup>

In June of 1998 Cranshaw recorded in Los Angeles with singer Gary LeMel for his album *Moonlighting* on Atlantic records.<sup>1529</sup> Arrangements were written by Roger Kellaway.<sup>1530</sup> The album features several different combinations of musicians, Cranshaw plays on two tracks, both with Grady Tate on drums.<sup>1531</sup>

In July of 1998 Cranshaw performed with Sonny Rollins at the Umbria Jazz Festival.<sup>1532</sup> The band included Cranshaw, Rollins, Stephen Scott, Clifton Anderson,

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<sup>1523</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1524</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1525</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1526</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Global Warming*, (1998) CD, Milestone Records, MCD-9280-2.

<sup>1527</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 a 2019."

<sup>1528</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1529</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1532</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*.

Perry Wilson, Victor See Yuen and an unidentified African percussionist.<sup>1533</sup> The full concert is now available streaming online.<sup>1534</sup> Cranshaw can be seen in the concert film playing the electric upright custom made for him by David Gage String Instruments.

From March of 1998 to September of 2000 singer Alex Donner recorded his album *White Tie* in New York.<sup>1535</sup> session took place on four dates, March 10 and August 10 1998, August 9, 1999, and September 8 2000.<sup>1536</sup> Cranshaw is one of two bassists on the album<sup>1537</sup> No specific dates or session information are given and no indication is made of which bassist plays on each track.

On August 8, of 1998, Cranshaw performed at the Jazz a Marciac Festival with Milt Jackson, Benny Green, Johnny Griffin and Milt Jackson.<sup>1538</sup> The concert was recorded for a short film including excerpts from the festival.<sup>1539</sup>

On May 5, 2000, Cranshaw performed at the Internationales Jazz Festival Bern for the “Piano Gala,” which featured Hank Jones, Randy Weston, Eric Reed, Ray Bryant, Junior Mance, Renee Rosnes, Eddie Palmieri and Mickey Roker.<sup>1540</sup> The concert was filmed for a documentary of the festival, but not released as an album.<sup>1541</sup>

On May 8 and 9, 2000, Cranshaw recorded with Sonny Rollins' group in New York for his album *This is What I Do* on Milestone Records.<sup>1542</sup> The band on the

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<sup>1533</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1534</sup> Seth Marks, “1996 Sonny Rollins Umbria Jazz,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJQ7IxpD-NA>, accessed 20 March 2020.

<sup>1535</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1536</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1537</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1538</sup> David Meeker, “Bob Cranshaw” *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1539</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1540</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1541</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1542</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

recording was Rollins' regular group of Cranshaw, Clifton Anderson, Stephen Scott and Victor See Yuen but instead of regular drummer Perry Wilson, Jack DeJohnette plays on the four tracks recorded on May 8 and 9.<sup>1543</sup> Rollins' group travelled to Japan in the summer of 2000 and a performance from that tour on June 8, at the Pantheon Tama in Tama City was recorded.<sup>1544</sup> The recording of this concert would be included on the 2008 Rollins' album *Road Shows: Volume 1*.<sup>1545</sup> Drummer Perry Wilson rejoined the rest of Rollins' regular group for the performance.<sup>1546</sup> Rollins resumed recording *This is What I Do* on July 29, recording the final two tracks for the album with his regular touring group including Perry Wilson.<sup>1547</sup>

In 2001 Cranshaw played on singer Steve Tyrell's album *Standard Time* on Columbia Records.<sup>1548</sup> Tyrell was a producer in Los Angeles and got many legendary jazz artists to perform on his album including Clark Terry, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Toots Thielmans and a young Jane Monheit.<sup>1549</sup> The recording features big band arrangements, was recorded at several different sessions, three bass players are credited and no specific information is given regarding who plays on specific tracks.<sup>1550</sup>

On February 15 and 16, 2001, Cranshaw recorded with pianist Mike LeDonne for his Milt Jackson tribute album *Bag's Groove*, on Double-Time Records.<sup>1551</sup> Both Cranshaw, LeDonne and drummer Mickey Roker had been members of Jackson's group

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<sup>1543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1544</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1546</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1547</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1548</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1549</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1550</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1551</sup> Ibid.



and had recorded Jackson on his 1997 album *Sa Va Bella*. Cranshaw plays acoustic bass, not the electric upright bass, on the recording. LeDonne credited the opposite nature of Cranshaw's and Roker's background as a key aspect of their chemistry and musical success.

He (Roker) and Bob had a perfect Yin and Yang. Mickey was a street dude, and Bob was a sophisticated urbanite. Bob was a college guy, and Mickey was from the projects. That kind of opposite thing really worked because they were perfect together. I think they loved each other more than they loved their wives. I can't say enough nice things about Bob.<sup>1552</sup>

In 2001 Cranshaw returned to Japan with the 100 Gold Fingers tour. A performance from Kan-I Hoken Hall in Tokyo was recorded and released as *Fujitsu Presents: 100 Gold Fingers Piano Playhouse 2001*.<sup>1553</sup> The group for the 2001 tour included Geri Allen, Kenny Barron, Ray Bryant, Cyrus Chestnut, Don Friedman, Benny Green, Junior Mance, Eric Reed, Mal Waldron, James Williams, Cranshaw and Grady Tate.<sup>1554</sup> This was Cranshaw's final time recording with Tate.<sup>1555</sup>

On September 15, 2001, Cranshaw performed a concert with Sonny Rollins at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston.<sup>1556</sup> The concert was nearly cancelled due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks just days before, but at the urging of Rollins' wife Lucille, the decision was made to go on with the show.<sup>1557</sup> Cranshaw plays a 5-string electric bass on the concert.<sup>1558</sup> Rollins told Terry Gross in a 2005 interview that he did not want to do the

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<sup>1552</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>1553</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1554</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1555</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1556</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1557</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Without a Song: The 9/11 Concert*, (2005) CD, Milestone Records, MCD-9342-2.

<sup>1558</sup> Ibid.

concert and had felt ill following the attacks.<sup>1559</sup> Rollins lived just 6 blocks from the World Trade Center and was stuck in his apartment without power or phone service until he was evacuated by the National Guard days later.<sup>1560</sup> The concert went on as scheduled, and included Cranshaw, Rollins, Clifton Anderson, Stephen Scott, Perry Wilson and Kimati Dinizulu.<sup>1561</sup> The concert was recorded live and six songs were included on an album called: *Without a Song: The 9/11 Concert*.<sup>1562</sup> This was Rollins' first live album since *G-Man* from 1986.<sup>1563</sup> Four additional tracks from the concert were eventually released on the 2016 album *Holding the Stage: Road Shows Volume 4*.<sup>1564</sup> The same group played a concert at the Saitama City Cultural Center in Saitama Japan on November 11, 2001, and one track from that performance "Biji" was included on *Road Shows: Volume 3*.<sup>1565</sup>

On May 4, 2002, Cranshaw performed at the Internationales Jazz Festival Bern in a Jazz at the Philharmonic Tribute.<sup>1566</sup> The concert featured Jon Faddis, Terrel Stafford, Benny Powell, Wycliffe Gordon, Frank Wess, James Moody, Red Holloway, Jesse Davis, Hank Jones, Ray Bryant, Mickey Roker, Louie Bellson and Vanessa Rubin.<sup>1567</sup> The performance was filmed for a documentary about the festival, but is not available as an album.

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<sup>1559</sup> Terry Gross, "Sonny Rollins: A Sept. 11 Memorial in Concert," *Fresh Air*, 12 September 2005, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4842544>, accessed 10 March 2020.

<sup>1560</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1561</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1562</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1563</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1564</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1566</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1567</sup> Ibid.

In 2002, biographers David Berger, Holly Maxson and filmmaker Kate Hirson interviewed Cranshaw for their documentary about Milt Hinton.<sup>1568</sup> Cranshaw appears several times in the film sharing his recollections about Hinton and their relationship.

On February 25 and 26, 2003, Cranshaw played on sessions for Gerald Wilson's album *New York, New Sound* on Mack Avenue Records.<sup>1569</sup> Cranshaw is one of three bassists listed as playing on the album and no specific information is given regarding what tracks individuals play on. This is Cranshaw's only recording with Gerald Wilson.<sup>1570</sup>

On December 8, 9 and 10, 2003 a collective group of jazz musicians called The Statesmen of Jazz recorded a 2 cd album with 28 tracks, titled *A Multitude of Stars* on the Arbors Jazz label.<sup>1571</sup> The notes explain the intention of the group was to revive the spirit of Jazz at the Philharmonic. The notes say:

Not since the heyday of Jazz at the Philharmonic has there been a jazz talent pool - indeed, a multitude of stars - to compare with the thirty here assembled under the banner of the happily reconstituted Statesmen of Jazz...<sup>1572</sup>

Cranshaw plays on three tracks with Don Sickler, Benny Powell, Frank Wess, Norman Simmons and Eddie Locke.<sup>1573</sup>

In 2004 Cranshaw played on six tracks of Rod Stewart's album *Stardust, The Great American Songbook: Volume III* on J Records.<sup>1574</sup> The album includes many guest

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<sup>1568</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1569</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1570</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1571</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1572</sup> Dan Morgenstern, notes to The Statesmen of Jazz, *A Multitude of Stars*, (2003) CD, Statesmen of Jazz/Arbors Records SOJCD202.

<sup>1573</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1574</sup> Ibid.

stars, the tracks Cranshaw played on include Stevie Wonder, Eric Clapton and Dolly Parton.<sup>1575</sup> One of the producers of the album was Steve Tyrell, who Cranshaw had recorded with in 2001.<sup>1576</sup>

On June 9 and 10, 2004, Cranshaw produced Sherri Maricle and The Diva Jazz Orchestra's album *T.N.T. A Tommy Newsom Tribute*.<sup>1577</sup> Cranshaw had worked with Maricle in Gregory Hines' group in 2000.<sup>1578</sup> Cranshaw was given an embroidered Diva jacket that he wore frequently, (he can be seen wearing it on the back of Joe Locke's 2005 album *Rev-Elation*) and Cranshaw was one of three men asked to pose for the mostly female re-interpretation of the great day in Harlem photo on the 50th anniversary of the original.<sup>1579</sup>

In August of 2004 Cranshaw played with Sonny Rollins at Damrosch Park in New York.<sup>1580</sup> The band featured Cranshaw, Rollins, Steve Jordan on drums and Kimati Dinizulu on percussion.<sup>1581</sup> There was no piano or guitarist playing on the concert.

In 2005 Cranshaw recorded with singer Lil Phillips for her album *Pull Out All Those Dreams*.<sup>1582</sup> The album also features Larry Willis and Ben Riley, this was

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<sup>1575</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1576</sup> Anonymous, notes to Rod Stewart, *Stardust, The Great American Songbook: Volume III*, (2004) CD, J Records, 62182.

<sup>1577</sup> Ron Wynn, "Bob Cranshaw Discography."

<sup>1578</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1579</sup> Richard J. Salvucci, "Band Ambition: Sherrie Maricle and Diva," *Jazztimes*, 13 March 2015, <https://www.allaboutjazz.com/band-ambition-sherrie-maricle-and-diva-sherrie-maricle-by-richard-j-salvucci.php?page=1>, accessed 10 March 2020.

<sup>1580</sup> Ben Ratliff, "For a Moment, the Mighty Sonny Rollins Shows Fans His Intimate Side," *New York Times*, 12 August 2004, <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/12/arts/festival-review-for-moment-mighty-sonny-rollins-shows-fans-his-intimate-side.htm>, accessed 10 March 2020.

<sup>1581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1582</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

Cranshaw's last recording with Riley.<sup>1583</sup> The album is self-released and difficult to find. Cranshaw plays acoustic bass, or possibly the electric-upright bass.

On March 17 and 18 2005 Cranshaw recorded with Maurice Hines on his album *To Nat, With Love* on Arbors Jazz.<sup>1584</sup> Cranshaw plays on 9 of the 15 tracks, Ben Brown plays on the other tracks, with arrangements by Tommy Newsom.<sup>1585</sup> The rhythm section of Cranshaw, Frank Owens and Sherri Maricle are the same as Hines' previous live recording from 2000.<sup>1586</sup>

In April of 2005 Cranshaw performed in London at Ronnie Scott's with Joe Locke for a Milt Jackson tribute.<sup>1587</sup> The band featured Jackson's rhythm section, including Cranshaw, Mike LeDonne and Mickey Roker. Two nights of the performances were recorded and released as the album *Rev-Elation* on Sharp Nine records.<sup>1588</sup> Cranshaw can be seen carrying a David Gage Czech-Ease travel bass on the back cover of the album.

On July 22, 2005, Cranshaw performed with Sonny Rollins band at the Jazz a Juan Festival in France.<sup>1589</sup> The band included Cranshaw, Rollins, Steve Jordan, Clifton Anderson, Bobby Broom, and Kimati Dinizulu.<sup>1590</sup> The band also toured Japan later in 2005.<sup>1591</sup> Broom recalled a reassuring feeling upon reuniting with Cranshaw both musically and personally.

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<sup>1583</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1585</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1586</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1587</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1588</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1589</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1590</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1591</sup> Brett Primack, "Sonny Please, The New Sonny Rollins CD," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Y6m3EDs9Z8>, accessed 10 March 2020.

Bob was always, just a sweetheart. When I was young, when I was middle. Through my whole time knowing him, he's really been the same. Super supportive, super encouraging. Helpful if need be. In whatever ways he felt he could help. So that's the feeling. I know that it stayed consistent... there was a feeling of support and comfort and that everything was taken care of on the bottom when playing with Bob. You didn't have to worry. You had your support there at all times.<sup>1592</sup>

On December 20 and 21, 2005, January 13 and February 9 and 10, 2006

Cranshaw played on Rollins final studio album *Sonny Please* on Rollins' own Doxy label.<sup>1593</sup> Steve Jordan and Bobby Broom rejoined Rollins group for the album as well as a subsequent tour that included a performance at the Jazz Vienne Festival in June of 2006.<sup>1594</sup> Victor Lewis replaced Steve Jordan on drums for the tour, the rest of the band was the same.<sup>1595</sup> Selections from live performances during this tour are included on Sonny Rollins albums *Road Shows: Volume 1* and *Volume 3*.<sup>1596</sup>

On May 31 and June 1, 2006, Cranshaw played on saxophonist Lew Del Gatto's album *Heroes*.<sup>1597</sup> The rhythm section on the album features Cranshaw with Don Friedman (who Cranshaw had worked with on the 100 Gold Fingers tour in 2001) and Mickey Roker.<sup>1598</sup> Cranshaw plays upright bass on the album, it is difficult to tell if it is electric-upright or not.

In 2007 Cranshaw recorded with vocalist David Leshare Watson for his album *Big Town*.<sup>1599</sup> The album also features Mike LeDonne and Mickey Roker.<sup>1600</sup> In the

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<sup>1592</sup> Bobby Broom, personal telephone interview (Evanston, IL and Greeley, CO 17 November 2019)

<sup>1593</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1594</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 a 2019"

<sup>1595</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1596</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1597</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1598</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1599</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1600</sup> Ibid.

album notes, Watson mentions that the title *Big Town* is Mickey Roker's nickname, which is derived from his given first name, Granville.<sup>1601</sup>

From June through November 2007 Cranshaw toured with Rollins' band, playing concerts in Canada, France and London.<sup>1602</sup> Selected tracks from these concerts are included on the albums *Road Shows: Volume 1, Volume 2* and *Volume 4*.<sup>1603</sup> Steve Jordan appeared with the band in Canada and France, Jerome Jennings replaced Jordan in England.<sup>1604</sup>

On December 10, 11 and 28, 2007, Cranshaw recorded with Clifton Anderson for his album *Decade* on Universal Japan.<sup>1605</sup> Cranshaw plays electric and upright bass on the album.<sup>1606</sup> Filmmaker Brett Primack recorded film excerpts during the recording process and filmed an interview with Cranshaw discussing the history of his upright bass.<sup>1607</sup>

On June 29, 2008, Cranshaw performed with Sonny Rollins at the Jazz a Vienne Festival for the fifth time.<sup>1608</sup> The performance was filmed and released by Rollins production company, as a full-length concert DVD called, *Sonny Rollins in Vienne*.<sup>1609</sup> The band featured Rollins, Cranshaw, Clifton Anderson, Bobby Broom, Victor Lewis and Kimati Dinizulu.<sup>1610</sup>

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<sup>1601</sup> David Leshare Watson, notes to David Leshare Watson, *Big Town*, (2007) CD, Music in the Vines, 330.

<sup>1602</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1603</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1604</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1606</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1607</sup> Brett Primack, "Bob Cranshaw's Upright Bass."

<sup>1608</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 a 2019."

<sup>1609</sup> For some reason this DVD is not listed in either TJD, which commonly lists concert videos, or the Meeker Jazz on Screen Filmography, but it is widely available.

<sup>1610</sup> Anonymous, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Sonny Rollins in Vienne*, (2008) DVD, Doxy Records, B0012128-09.

On December 11 and 12, 2008, Cranshaw recorded with saxophonist Paul Fleisher for his album *That Bridge - A New York Story* on Jupiter Japan.<sup>1611</sup> The album is a tribute to Sonny Rollins and all of the members of the rhythm section played with Rollins.<sup>1612</sup> The band includes Cranshaw, Kenny Barron and Al Foster.<sup>1613</sup>

In 2009 Cranshaw recorded with Mike Longo for his trio album *Sting Like a Bee* on Consolidated Artists Productions.<sup>1614</sup> On the album with Longo and Cranshaw is drummer Lewis Nash.<sup>1615</sup> Cranshaw plays the electric-upright on this album.

On July 14 and 15, 2009, Cranshaw recorded with vibraphonist Chuck Redd for his album *The Common Thread* on Arbors Jazz.<sup>1616</sup> This album also featured Houston Peron, Rossano Sportiello on piano and Mickey Roker.<sup>1617</sup> This was Cranshaw's final recording with Roker, they appear on over 60 albums together, more than any other drummer.<sup>1618</sup>

In September of 2009 Cranshaw played a concert with Sonny Rollins in St. Louis, MO.<sup>1619</sup> The concert was recorded and one track was included on the album *Road Shows: Volume 3*, however the song "Solo Sonny," is just that, solo Sonny Rollins.<sup>1620</sup> The band does not play on the track, but the band for the performance included Cranshaw, Rollins, Clifton Anderson, Bobby Broom, Kobie Watkins and Sammy Figueroa.<sup>1621</sup>

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<sup>1611</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1612</sup> Anonymous, notes to Paul Fleisher, *That Bridge - A New York Story*, (2008) CD, Jupiter Japan, DDCJ-7103.

<sup>1613</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1614</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1615</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1616</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1617</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1618</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1619</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1620</sup> Bob Blumenthal, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Road Shows: Volume 3*, (2014) CD, Doxy/Okeh 88843-04998-2.

<sup>1621</sup> Ibid.



In 2010, Cranshaw recorded with guitarist Lou Volpe for his album *Hear and Now* on the Jazz Guitar label.<sup>1622</sup> The band on the album includes Cranshaw, Volpe, Onaje Alan Gumbs and Buddy Williams.<sup>1623</sup> Cranshaw plays electric bass on the album.

On July 11, 2010, Cranshaw played with Sonny Rollins at the North Sea Jazz Festival in the Netherlands.<sup>1624</sup> The concert was recorded for a concert film from the festival.<sup>1625</sup> The band included Cranshaw, Rollins, Peter Bernstein, Kobie Watkins and Sammy Figueroa.<sup>1626</sup> Later in 2010 Cranshaw played an 80th birthday celebration at the Beacon Theater in New York for Sonny Rollins with many special guests.<sup>1627</sup> Cranshaw played upright and electric bass in the concert and some selections from the concert were released on Rollins album, *Road Shows: Volume 2*.<sup>1628</sup> The band is praised in the notes to the album, they say:

We've grown used to thinking of Rollins' regular sidemen as a mere back-up band, but the band he leads here (also featuring Sammy Figueroa on hand drums and Sonny's longtime associate Bob Cranshaw on bass) deserves praise as a fully integrated unit.<sup>1629</sup>

On December 4, 2010, Cranshaw's lifetime achievements were recognized by being named the 2010 Giant of Jazz Award honoree.<sup>1630</sup> The event, founded by John Lee, brought many people from Cranshaw's past together for a concert honoring his life. Guests included Roy Hargrove, Jimmy Heath, Ron Carter, Buster Williams, Paul West,

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<sup>1622</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1623</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1624</sup> David Meeker, "Bob Cranshaw" *Jazz on the Screen: A Jazz and Blues Filmography*

<sup>1625</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1626</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1627</sup> John Abbott, "Sonny's Big Day," *Downbeat Magazine*, December 2010, 24-29.

<sup>1628</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1629</sup> Francis Davis, notes to Sonny Rollins, *Road Shows: Volume 2* (2011) Doxy/Okeh Records, B0015949-02.

<sup>1630</sup> Tammy La Gorce, "Honors for Alumnus of 'Saturday Night Live Band' (Guess When)" *The New York Times*, 26 November 2010, NJ 12.

Lisle Atkinson, Mickey Roker, Paquito D’Rivera and many others. Lee described his motivation for the honor, he said: “(Bob Cranshaw) is one of the most beloved and selfless musicians out there... Every year we try to concentrate on someone who has not been honored by the big jazz venues in New York.”<sup>1631</sup> Cranshaw’s reaction to the award was characteristically understated, “I never look for credit; with music, I try to give back.”<sup>1632</sup>

On December 15 2010 Cranshaw performed at the Jazz Standard in New York with a band playing music from the Johnny Griffin Orchestra album *The Big Soul-Band*, which Cranshaw had played on in 1960.<sup>1633</sup> The group was assembled by Don Sickler and the arrangements were written by Norman Simmons, who had arranged the music for the original album.<sup>1634</sup> The parts played on the recording by Griffin, who died in 2008, were played by Houston Person. The band also included Lewis Nash, Eric Alexander and Harold Mabern.<sup>1635</sup> Mabern had also played on the original recording.<sup>1636</sup>

On December 20 and 30, 2010, Cranshaw recorded with saxophonist Bob Mover for his album *My Heart Tells Me* on the Motema Music label.<sup>1637</sup> The 16 track double CD features Mover singing and playing saxophone with the rhythm section of Cranshaw, Kenny Barron and Victor Lewis or Steve Williams on drums.<sup>1638</sup> Cranshaw plays acoustic bass on the whole album.

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<sup>1631</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1632</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1633</sup> Nate Chinen, “Jazz Listings for Dec. 10-16” *The New York Times*, 9 December 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/10/arts/music/10jazz.html>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1634</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1635</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1636</sup> Lord, “TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw.”

<sup>1637</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1638</sup> Ibid.

On August 1, 2011, Cranshaw recorded with Mike Longo for his album *To My Surprise* album.<sup>1639</sup> The rhythm section of Longo, Cranshaw and Lewis Nash was the same as Longo's previous release and the album also adds Jimmy Owens on trumpet and Lance Bryant on saxophone.<sup>1640</sup> Longo described the chemistry of the band in the notes to the album. He said:

Bob and Lewis are both from the same 'polymetric school' of playing where you can have more than one meter going on at the same time...With them and with the quintet there is a contrapuntal perfection between the musicians, plus a great action-reaction thing, a lot of spontaneous combustion with surprises going on<sup>1641</sup>

In 2012 Cranshaw became an executive board member of the New York Musicians Union, Local 802.<sup>1642</sup> Local 802 Recording-Vice President Andy Schwartz remembered Cranshaw's early days working for the union, before becoming an executive board member.

He had the title of Jazz Consultant. Although I wasn't an officer, I was an executive board member... He was the go-to person for jazz musicians trying to deal with the union. Because there was certainly a long era of disconnect between the AFM and Jazz musicians. It's a very complicated relationship because there were many musicians who played on union dates who were in the union and jazz musicians. But many jazz musicians didn't do as much freelance work as Bob, didn't know the agreements, and didn't know the union scene. And their families were sometimes at a loss how to handle certain things and Bob would be the go-to person. People who had very little connection to our union would understand Bob Cranshaw. (They said) "Hey Bob Cranshaw is there. You can go see Bob." He helped so many people. So Many jazz artists and also their families when there was... when somebody passed, he would be the person that the families would come to to understand what might be happening in terms of pensions of death benefits or just to give them, make some contact for them. Bob worked on this floor. He was such a warm and welcoming person for the music

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<sup>1639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1640</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1641</sup> Mike Longo, notes to Mike Longo Trio + 2, *To My Surprise*, (2011) CD, Consolidated Artists Productions, CAP 1030.

<sup>1642</sup> Weeks, "Bob Cranshaw's Heart and Soul" *Allegro*.

community, especially jazz, but all musicians really benefited from knowing him.<sup>1643</sup>

When Cranshaw transitioned to a member of Local 802's executive board, his role expanded and included trips to Albany, NY and Washington, DC on behalf of the union's members' interests. Schwartz considered Cranshaw a vital member of the leadership of Local 802.

Around 2011 or 2012, he became an executive board member, which was long overdue. He was appointed when Maxine Roach, who was Max Roach's daughter, resigned from the board. And it was a great thing to do because we had a Jazz artist sitting on the board again. Jimmy Owens had for some years, about three years ended in 2008, but Jimmy was a consultant figure who sat on the board. He wasn't an executive board member, but he was a jazz advisor. Then there was a period of time when we didn't have somebody who had been elected, but jazz needed to be represented. So ultimately, we were able to combine those two things by having Bob appointed to the executive board. He was already 80 (maybe) at that point. And he had been going through his health problems, but he was a great board member. He didn't talk a lot. He listened a lot. But when he did speak it was wisdom. You were hearing some sage advice and it was great having him on the board.<sup>1644</sup>

Cranshaw maintained his role as a member of the executive board at Local 802 for the remainder of his life.

In 2012 Cranshaw recorded with Clifton Anderson for his album *And So We Carry on* on the Daywood Drive label.<sup>1645</sup> TJD accurately lists Cranshaw as the only bassist on the album. In fact Cranshaw was one of two bassists on the recording, the other was Essiet Okon Essiet.<sup>1646</sup> The notes to the album do not specify which tracks Cranshaw plays on, but the ensemble with Cranshaw features Anderson, Eric Wyatt, Monty

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<sup>1643</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>1644</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1645</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1646</sup> Clifton Anderson, "And So We Carry On - New CD Trailer" <https://youtu.be/59pCxG1WR3o> accessed 21 March 2020.

Alexander and Steve Jordan.<sup>1647</sup><sup>1648</sup> Cranshaw played the electric upright bass on *And So We Carry On*.

On July 11, 2011, Cranshaw played with Sonny Rollins band at the Jazz a Vienne Festival.<sup>1649</sup> The band featured Cranshaw, Rollins, Peter Bernstein, Kobie Watkins and Sammy Figueroa.<sup>1650</sup> There is a video of this performance available online, though it was never released commercially.<sup>1651</sup>

Rollins' group performed at the Umbria Jazz Festival in early July of 2012 with the same members and Clifton Anderson added on trombone.<sup>1652</sup> A short clip of this performance is available online.<sup>1653</sup> A review of the Umbria performance mentioned that Rollins appeared to be struggling with fatigue during the concert and the group played a short set.<sup>1654</sup> The same group also performed in Marseille at the Palais Longchamp on July 25, 2012.<sup>1655</sup> Three tracks from the Marseille concert were released on the Sonny Rollins album *Road Shows, Volume 3*.<sup>1656</sup> There is no mention of Rollins displaying any physical problems during the Marseille appearance. On August 31, 2012, Cranshaw

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<sup>1647</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1648</sup> Despite the inaccuracies of TJD for this entry, I was present at the session and can verify the accuracy of the personnel for the session that Cranshaw played on.

<sup>1649</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 à 2019"

<sup>1650</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1651</sup> Anonymous, "Sonny Rollins - Jazz a Vienne 2011 - Live HD" <https://youtu.be/lxzuvS29lR8> accessed 21 March 2020.

<sup>1652</sup> Anonymous, "Umbria Jazz 2012 - Sonny Rollins (Full HD)" <https://youtu.be/R7LwD0FNfIY> accessed 21 March 2020.

<sup>1653</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1654</sup> Thomas Conrad, "Review: Umbria Jazz Festival 2012" *JazzTimes*, <https://jazztimes.com/reviews/live/review-umbria-jazz-festival-2012/> 25 April 2019, accessed 21 March 2020.

<sup>1655</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1656</sup> Ibid.

played with Rollins at the Detroit Jazz Festival. The band was the same as the Rollins' previous appearances in 2012 but Saul Rubin replaced Peter Bernstein.<sup>1657</sup>

Rollins was originally supposed to perform at the 2013 Jazz à Vienne Festival, but his performance was cancelled and he was replaced by Ahmad Jamal.<sup>1658</sup> In 2013 Rollins won the Emeritus Jazz Artists: Beyond Voting Award from the Jazz Journalists Association.<sup>1659</sup> The awards were presented at the Blue Note jazz club in New York on June 19. Rollins did not attend, and Cranshaw accepted the award at the ceremony on Rollins behalf.

In September of 2013 Cranshaw recorded with Mike Longo and Lewis Nash for Longo's album *Step On It*, on Longo's Consolidated Artists label.<sup>1660</sup> *Step On It* is the third and final album that Cranshaw recorded with Longo and Nash. Cranshaw plays the electric upright bass on the recording. The album contains mostly jazz standards and includes the only opportunity to hear Cranshaw play several classic modern jazz compositions, Wayne Shorter's "Black Nile," "Nefertiti" and "Ana Maria" and Joe Henderson's "Black Narcissus."<sup>1661</sup>

On September 5 and 6, 2014, Cranshaw played at Smoke Jazz Club with George Coleman's quartet. The group also featured Mike LeDonne and Louis Hayes.<sup>1662</sup> There is

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<sup>1657</sup> Mike Stratton, "Detroit Jazz Festival 2012: Sonny Rollins Jumps the Blue Moon on Opening Night." [https://www.mlive.com/entertainment/detroit/2012/09/detroit\\_jazz\\_festival\\_opening.html](https://www.mlive.com/entertainment/detroit/2012/09/detroit_jazz_festival_opening.html), accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1658</sup> Anonymous, "Programmation Jazz à Vienne: de 1980 à 2019"

<sup>1659</sup> Anonymous, "2013 JJA Jazz Awards Party Photos," <https://www.jjazzawards.org/2013/>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1660</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1661</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1662</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: September 2014" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 42-43. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201409.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

a brief clip of this performance on the Smoke Jazz Club YouTube channel.<sup>1663</sup> Cranshaw played at Smoke with John Webber's guitar quartet, also featuring Harold Mabern and Joe Farnsworth on June 1, June 8, August 31, September 28 and November 20 of 2014.<sup>1664 1665 1666 1667</sup>

On November 29, 2014 Cranshaw played at Smalls Jazz Club in New York with Chuck Redd's quartet.<sup>1668</sup> The band featured Redd, Cranshaw, Emmet Cohen and Kevin Kanner.<sup>1669</sup> Smalls Jazz Club archives performances on their website and there is a video of the performance on the Smalls Live website.<sup>1670</sup>

On April 15, 2015 Cranshaw recorded with Mike LeDonne in Paramus, NJ, at Trading 8s Studio for the album *Aww!RIGHT!* on the Savant label.<sup>1671</sup> The album featured LeDonne's regular organ group with Eric Alexander, Peter Bernstein and Joe Farnsworth, (which has occupied Tuesday evenings at the Smoke Jazz Club in New York for many years) as well as special guests Cranshaw and Jeremy Pelt. Cranshaw frequently played electric bass with LeDonne's group on Tuesdays. Cranshaw plays electric bass on the recording. LeDonne cites Cranshaw's bass playing as a large influence on his organ playing.

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<sup>1663</sup> Anonymous, "George Coleman Quartet," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNEm3zHItSc>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1664</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: June 2014" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 43-44. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201406.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1665</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: August 2014" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 36. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201408.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1666</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: September 2014" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 47.

<sup>1667</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: November 2014" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 42. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201411.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1668</sup> Anonymous, "Bob Cranshaw," <https://www.smallslive.com/artists/1788-bob-cranshaw/>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1669</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1670</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1671</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

My bass playing on the organ is based on Bob Cranshaw's bass lines. I totally hear him when I'm playing organ. He always used to preach to me about putting an edge, a forward motion, right in the front and push, but not speed up. I started doing it on the organ and realized it feels like Bob. That's why it worked so well on my record date (With Bob) because I had his conception, all my life, of how to play organ bass. So, his bass sounded like a better me. If my left hand were Bob Cranshaw. That was a direct influence and I told him that all the time. He would come hear us all the time at smoke and he wouldn't even play. He would say "You guys sounded so good I wanted to jump up there and play! It was cookin'!" And I would say "I'm just doing what you did Bob. My whole life, my whole center of my (organ) bass playing is about you, and where you put the time." And that's what I always tell my students. All the fills and decorations that he would put in his lines were always in the right spot. Right when you want to hear it, bang! He does it, right in the perfect spot. Now that's a special talent.<sup>1672</sup>

On May 6, 2015, Cranshaw played with the Sean Lyons quintet at Smoke.<sup>1673</sup> The group also featured Steve Davis, David Hazeltine and Joe Farnsworth.<sup>1674</sup> On June 3, 2015, Cranshaw played in the Bronx with Eric Alexander, Harold Mabern and Jimmy Cobb.<sup>1675</sup> There are three clips from the performance on the producer, Linda Manning's, YouTube page.<sup>1676</sup> On June 8, 2015, Cranshaw was honored by The Jazz Gallery with their Contribution to the Arts Award.<sup>1677</sup> Other recipients of the award in 2015 included George Avakian, Junior Mance, Hank O'Neal and Dale Fitzgerald.<sup>1678</sup> On August 1, 2015, Cranshaw played at Smalls with the Chuck Redd quartet including Mike LeDonne

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<sup>1672</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

<sup>1673</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: May 2015" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 35.  
<http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tncjcr201505.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1674</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1675</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: June 2015" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 42.  
<http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tncjcr201506.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1676</sup> Linda Manning, "Videos" <https://www.youtube.com/user/lsmbronx/videos>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1677</sup> Anonymous, "What's News" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 5.  
<http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tncjcr201506.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1678</sup> Ibid.



and Darrian Douglas.<sup>1679</sup> The Smalls website archive has a video of this performance.<sup>1680</sup> On August 29, 2015, Cranshaw played the music of Sonny Rollins at The Kitano with Mark Soskin and Al Foster.<sup>1681</sup> On September 25 and 26, 2015, Cranshaw played at Mezzrow with Mike LeDonne.<sup>1682</sup> On October 22, 2015, Cranshaw played at the Jazz Foundation of America, Great Night in Harlem fundraiser concert.<sup>1683</sup> Other performers at the benefit included Donald Fagen, Kenny Garrett, Jimmy Heath, Randy Weston, Jack DeJohnette and Wallace Roney.<sup>1684</sup>

On November 6, 2015, Cranshaw played a concert of Cannonball Adderley's at Flushing Town Hall in Queens that also featured Barry Harris, Albert Heath, Jimmy Heath, Michael Mossman and Steve Davis.<sup>1685</sup> There is a short video of part of the concert on the Flushing Town Hall YouTube page.<sup>1686</sup> On November 15, 2015, Cranshaw was honored by the Wilbur Ware institute at Cassandra's Jazz and Gallery.<sup>1687</sup> Cranshaw was presented with a gold music stand at the ceremony. Louis Hayes was also honored at the same ceremony.<sup>1688</sup>

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<sup>1679</sup> Anonymous, "Bob Cranshaw," <https://www.smallslive.com/artists/1788-bob-cranshaw/>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1680</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1681</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: August 2015" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 40. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201508.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1682</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: September 2015" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 43-44. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201509.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1683</sup> Anonymous, "A Great Night in Harlem," *The New York City Jazz Record*, 12. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201510.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1684</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1685</sup> Anonymous, "Jazz Concerts & Jams @ Flushing Town Hall" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 31. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201510.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1686</sup> Anonymous, "NEA Jazz Masters Concert 2015 at Flushing Town Hall," <https://youtu.be/Mg4TG-AJkg>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1687</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: November 2015" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 49. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201511.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1688</sup> Ibid.

On November 24, 2015, Cranshaw recorded with George Coleman at Sear Sound in New York for Coleman's album *A Master Speaks* on the Smoke Sessions label.<sup>1689</sup> The album featured Cranshaw, Coleman, Mike LeDonne, Peter Bernstein, George Coleman Jr., and was produced by Eric Alexander.<sup>1690</sup> Cranshaw played electric upright on the album.

On January 14, 2016, Cranshaw performed at the Jazz Legends for Disability Pride fundraiser concert at Quaker Friends Meeting Hall in New York, which was organized by Mike LeDonne.<sup>1691</sup> Cranshaw performed with Monty Alexander and Carl Allen. Other artists at the benefit included Wynton Marsalis, Benny Golson, Christian McBride, Harold Mabern, George Coleman, Buster Williams, Louis Hayes and Bill Charlap.<sup>1692</sup> LeDonne recalled Cranshaw's strong support for him and Cranshaw's dedication to the project.

All the things he did for me when my daughter was born. He was right here. The minute we got home, he came over the next day and brought her a sesame street talking doll and was there like, "This is different, but whatever, let's just get behind this. And we're going to enjoy this." I really appreciate that kind of kindness and empathy from him. I mean all my life he was like that. When I did my disability pride, when I started disability pride, he would never miss one. He would show up at every one. And always inspiring me, like we gotta do it again. He wanted to be part of that cause, from his heart and soul.<sup>1693</sup>

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<sup>1689</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1690</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1691</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: January 2016" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 46. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201601.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1692</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1693</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

On February 5, 6 and 7, 2016, Cranshaw played at Dizzy's Club with Joe Farnsworth's group featuring Harold Mabern and Jeremy Pelt.<sup>1694</sup> There is a video of one set available online.<sup>1695</sup> On February 10 and 11, 2016, Cranshaw played at Smoke with Sean Lyons quintet featuring Eddie Henderson, David Hazeltine and Al Foster.<sup>1696</sup>

On March 14, 2016, Cranshaw recorded with Eric Alexander at Trading 8s in Paramus for his album *Second Impression* on the High Note label.<sup>1697</sup> *Second Impression* also featured Harold Mabern and Joe Farnsworth.<sup>1698</sup> Cranshaw played both electric and electric upright bass on the album. On March 20, 2016, Cranshaw played with Harold Mabern, George Coleman and Joe Farnsworth at Smoke.<sup>1699</sup> The listing in *The New York City Jazz Record* incorrectly states that John Webber and Eric Alexander, it was, in fact, Bob Cranshaw and George Coleman.

On March 29, 2016, Cranshaw recorded with Massimo Farao for his album *Swingin'* on the Venus Japan label.<sup>1700</sup> The album features several combinations of rhythm sections. Cranshaw played with Kenny Washington, Leroy Williams, Byron Landham, Louis Hayes and Kyle Poole on one track each.<sup>1701</sup> This was Cranshaw's final recording.<sup>1702</sup>

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<sup>1694</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: February 2016" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 37. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201602.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1695</sup> Anonymous, "Joe Farnsworth Prime Time Quartet Live at Dizzy's 2016 2nd Set," <https://youtu.be/VLP14AvSbrE>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1696</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: February 2016" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 38.

<sup>1697</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1698</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1699</sup> Anonymous, "Calendar: March 2016" *The New York City Jazz Record*, 42. <http://www.nycjazzrecord.com/issues/tnycjr201603.pdf>, accessed 22 March 2020.

<sup>1700</sup> Lord, "TJD-Online: Bob Cranshaw."

<sup>1701</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1702</sup> Ibid.

Cranshaw had a recurrence of prostate cancer that progressed throughout 2016. There were several gigs that he was forced to cancel due to his deteriorating health. On April 30, 2016 Cranshaw performed at the 9th Note Jazz Club in Stamford, CT, with Mark Soskin, Eric Wyatt, Sammy Figueroa and Joe Corsello. Cranshaw's cancer got progressively worse in 2016. He underwent chemotherapy and radiation to slow the spread of his disease, but eventually it metastasized to the bone. In September of 2016 Cranshaw's family informed the public that he was in need of constant medical attention and asked for donations to support his care.<sup>1703</sup> Cranshaw died peacefully, in his sleep at home, at 12:48 pm eastern time on November 2.<sup>1704</sup>

A memorial for Cranshaw was held at St. Peter's Church in New York on January 30, 2017. Musicians, family, friends and fans from throughout Cranshaw's career paid respect to him in song and spoken tributes. Musicians in attendance included Ron Carter, Buster Williams, Tony Garnier, Tony Lannen, Alex Blake, John Lee, Christian McBride, Gerald Cannon, Ron Blake, Cecil Bridgewater, Clifton Anderson, Steve Jordan, Eddie Allen, Bobby Broom, Lenny Pickett, Mike Longo, Sammy Figueroa, Al Foster, Monty Alexander, Tom Barney, Mickey Roker, Reggie Workman, Kenny Barron, Jimmy Heath, Mike LeDonne, Maurice Hines, Andy Schwartz, Candido Camero, Javon Jackson, Russell Malone, Billy Hartt, Barry Harris, Jim Czak and others. The service concluded with nine bassists playing "The Sidewinder," with Barry Harris, Steve Jordan, Monty Alexander, Ron Blake, Clifton Anderson and Cecil Bridgewater.

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<sup>1703</sup> Karyn Scott Harden, "The Bob Cranshaw Care Fund,"  
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/bobcranshaw>, accessed 23 March 2020.

<sup>1704</sup> Ibid.

Ron Carter recalled the service and chose to dwell on his good memories of Cranshaw.

I've done too many of those things man, and they're all painful experiences for me. The guys are gone, and the ladies are gone, and this is my farewell to them and I kind of let go and savor the memories. I have Bob in my head, alive. Saying "Alright!" Being responsible as a bass player. Being a role model for guys who want to find out "How do you get from A to B?" He could tell them, 'cause he was doing it, right this moment. I'd rather lay with that memory, rather than the service itself.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Bob Cranshaw is known best for his decades of playing on jazz albums. Many of the albums that he played on have achieved classic status among jazz fans and scholars. The hundreds of jazz recordings that Cranshaw made spun a large portion of the current history of jazz from 1957 to 2016. Cranshaw's playing developed throughout his career and demonstrates some of the changes that occurred in jazz as it evolved. Cranshaw was an early adopter of the electric bass and his exemplary electric bass playing contributed to its acceptance as a valid jazz instrument. Cranshaw had an extremely diverse and lengthy career. His playing earned him the admiration and respect of thousands of musicians, producers and fans in numerous genres.

In addition to Cranshaw's distinguished career as a jazz artist, he played music for numerous successful films, Broadway shows, television programs and commercials as a studio musician. Cranshaw's talents could have earned him fame, but he never pursued recognition himself. Instead of seeking attention for himself, Cranshaw preferred to provide support for other musicians. Cranshaw's role as a supportive member of the groups he played in also translated to roles outside of music performance. Cranshaw's supporting work outside of music can be traced throughout his life, from the help he gave his brothers in their times of need, to his military service, to his work as a garbage man in order to support his family, to his mentorship of young musicians, to his work at Local

802, to his work at The Jazz Foundation to his work for Disability Pride. Each of these selfless acts were recognized by Cranshaw's colleagues, friends and family.

This study has sought to provide context for Cranshaw as a musician and as a person. In order to fully understand the music that Cranshaw made, it is important to also understand who he was. Drummer Joe Farnsworth alluded to this in his remembrance of Cranshaw.

AT (Arthur Taylor) used to say about Philly Joe, "He's a tremendous player, but I feel bad that you never met the man because it was beyond his playing. The personality and the person" ... It was the same way with Bob. His playing was unbelievable, but you meet him as a person, it's even better. Then you go hear him play, and its right on the fuckin' money. It makes complete sense.<sup>1705</sup>

Since Cranshaw's death in 2016 it is no longer possible to know him personally. By reviewing his catalog of recorded music and related media, collecting Cranshaw's words, and the words of people that knew him well, it is possible to better understand what made Cranshaw so important and unique. It is my hope that this study inspires people to not only play music in the spirit of Cranshaw, but also to live their lives in a similar manner. Cranshaw's music is deservedly well respected and knowing more about the man behind the music can only heighten the importance of that music. It is not surprising that all of the individuals who provided interviews for this study used similar terms to describe Cranshaw's music and spirit: humility, modesty, groove, generosity, love. These characteristics define the enduring memories of Cranshaw held by those who knew him well.

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<sup>1705</sup> Joe Farnsworth, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley CO, 24 March 2020)

The first time I met Bob Cranshaw was in 2008. Joe Farnsworth urged me to contact him, as he did with many other young bassists. Cranshaw agreed to meet me for a lesson at the Local 802 office on 46<sup>th</sup> street in New York. I was impressed that he knew everyone and made a point of warmly greeting every single person he saw, from the security guard at the door to the Local 802 executives and musicians. In the lesson I played what I had prepared, and when I had finished, rather than offer comments or criticism he simply asked me, “What do you want me to teach you?” I replied that all of his records had a special feeling and that if I could learn one thing from him, I wanted to be able to make music feel the way he did. He responded, “That’s all I ever cared about. I never wanted to take a solo, I just want to make the band feel good. That’s more about life than about music. If you want to learn that, we’ll have to spend time together.”

After that lesson, we spoke almost every day. He brought me with him to recording sessions, gigs, meetings, rehearsals and he welcomed me into his home. One night after a Sonny Rollins concert in New Jersey, I was waiting for him outside the stage door. There were dozens of people hoping to get backstage and see Rollins. Cranshaw came outside pointed me out and said, “That’s my family, let him through.” I have so many examples of his warmth, kindness, generosity and selfless attitude. He wanted to make sure that I knew how to take care of myself in the difficult environment of the music industry. Observing the way he lived everyday life taught me valuable lessons musically, personally and professionally. I hope that this study demonstrates how great Cranshaw’s impact was in a wide variety of contexts. It is my belief that Cranshaw’s lessons transcend generations and in his words are, “More about life than about music.”



Examples of Cranshaw's numerous acts of selflessness, both in musical contexts and non-musical contexts, described in the words of Cranshaw and those who witnessed his actions.

- Cranshaw turned down an offer from Art Blakey to join the Jazz Messengers because the pay could be unreliable and Cranshaw wanted to ensure income security for his family.

Bob Cranshaw:

I didn't go with Art because I couldn't deal with the other shit. I couldn't get paid in drugs so I couldn't depend on spending time bullshitting. But in my heart, I would've liked to have a chance to play (with Blakey).<sup>1706</sup>

- Cranshaw worked as a garbage man, an unglamorous profession, in order to support his family. At the time, he played music for enjoyment and had no thoughts of becoming a rich and famous musician.

Bob Cranshaw:

I never even thought about it (fame). I never had a dream to play all the time. I never thought about it one way or the other... If you wanted to groove, I'd go to any of those clubs and sit down. If you want the people to clap their hands tonight to what's happening onstage, I'll set this motherfucker on fire. I knew that. That was more positive than my playing. I knew my feel. I already knew. If you want to swing, I would go to different places to play and I knew. Ya'll motherfuckers, you may be playing around. Tonight, this shit is gonna feel good tonight. I already knew that I never backed away from that thing, yet I never thought about the rest of it, cause fuck it. I don't have to be the best bass player in the world, so I didn't get into all that other shit to cloud my thinking. I knew I had a good feel.<sup>1707</sup>

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<sup>1706</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY 26 May 2016)

<sup>1707</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY 15 July 2016)

Harold Mabern:

At that time, I didn't know Cranshaw was a musician, I knew he worked on the garbage truck... At the time I didn't know... I used to see him... working on the garbage truck, he's the garbage man.<sup>1708</sup>

- Cranshaw never sought recognition as soloist or bandleader. He wanted to make the band feel good and the bandleader shine.

Bob Cranshaw:

I love to play time. Soloing doesn't matter to me; I enjoy creating the pocket that makes the whole group sound good. That's my reward. I'll block for you all day long so you can run for the touchdowns.<sup>1709</sup>

Mike LeDonne:

If you get into just Cranshaw's bass playing you have so many records that are just mind blowing for how hard they're swinging. I always tell bass players that he's right up there with Ray Brown, Ron Carter, Paul Chambers, Sam Jones, Israel Crosby, George Duvivier, he's right up there. He was never an out front, soloist, ego (driven), self-centered musician. Bob was a giving human being and he gave everything he had on the bandstand and he didn't even care if he took a solo. He had no interest in being a great soloist, even though he could take great solos. But that wasn't where his fun was. His fun was in being in the background grooving like hell. As he would always say, kicking ass in the rhythm section. And that's what he did.

John Webber:

Basically, he was going for maximum swing at all times. On the porkchop or on the acoustic bass. I guess there are a few technical differences, but the end goal was the same. Just to be swinging as hard as possible. But not only that, with taste, and he played perfect bass lines, perfect time, great sound. And I guess in a way, he played so good, but it's a subtle thing. He's not flashy, so in a certain way, he can be overlooked. He wasn't really big on playing solos. You listen to all the different rhythm sections he played in, and they all sound great. It doesn't matter if it's with Billy Higgins or Art Blakey or Elvin. It's just always great. And those are great drummers as

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<sup>1708</sup> Harold Mabern, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 12 October 2018)

<sup>1709</sup> Chris Jisi, "Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best" *Bass Player*, October 1996, 30-31.

well, but when you hear him play you just hear the sound of the rhythm section. You're not really separating one from the other. You hear the sound of the whole and his contribution to that was enormous. He was more interested in being part of the groove. He told me his father was a drummer and his brother was a piano player. He said "I didn't care what I played. I just wanted to be part of it." So that really explains his approach.<sup>1710</sup>

Joe Farnsworth:

Maybe it was because of the lack of soloing, but I don't hear people talk about Bob that much. I can't figure it out for the life of me. That was the baddest motherfucker on bass. As far as playing time, sound, and a beat. Big beat Bob, forget about it man. I told every young bass player to go and see him. It's almost like, if you're not making faces and skipping around, it's not hip. But meanwhile he's swinging you into submission.<sup>1711</sup>

Jerome Harris:

It's interesting, there's modesty about his playing. He would seldom play stuff that called attention to himself, but he really made the stuff feel and sound the way it should. It's like modest elegance. It was so much fun being on the stand and hearing him do that. It's an object lesson in the value of that... but it was never *merely* background. That's something that I love and respect and study him for.<sup>1712</sup>

Clifton Anderson:

Bob didn't have to be up front. His name didn't have to be on the marquee. His role was so important that if you approach music in a humbling way, you realize he's no less important than the name on that marquee. He's no less important than the people he made sound as great as they sound.<sup>1713</sup>

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<sup>1710</sup> John Webber, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

<sup>1711</sup> Joe Farnsworth, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

<sup>1712</sup> Jerome Harris, personal interview (New York, NY 26 November 2019)

<sup>1713</sup> Clifton Anderson, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

- Cranshaw remained committed to Sonny Rollins for over 50 years.

Bobby Broom:

The other thing I realized later on through osmosis is the length of time that Bob worked with Sonny and the commitment. Thinking about what that meant and why that would be. Coming to see the importance of that for a variety of reasons. Looking at my own musical situation and as the years went on my career and life and seeing Bob as an example.<sup>1714</sup>

Clifton Anderson:

It's very hard to play with Bob for so many years, then go and play with another bass player. It's difficult because you're looking for those certain things that he would just automatically bring out in the music. Bob was very impactful on many levels. For me I was very happy to have spent the amount of time that I was able to have spent. In the context of Sonny's group also it was really a blessing and it was not an experience that most musicians will ever have... He was the grounding; he was the anchor. No matter who was in the band, Bob was the anchor always. He's a much more important figure in this music than people are aware of... he held down the stage and he was the anchor of Sonny's stage...<sup>1715</sup>

Cranshaw

I enjoyed them (Rollins' bands) because they (each member) understood their roles within the band. I mean they laid the shit down so... all I had to do was just sit and try to groove it out. You know what I'm saying? So it made my role very, very easy for me.<sup>1716</sup>

- Cranshaw was more musically open-minded than many other musicians. He enjoyed playing in a wide variety of contexts, regardless of musical style.

Andy Schwartz:

Bob's work on Sesame Street and other super commercial freelance things provided him with a great living. Didn't get in the way of his jazz work with the greats like Sonny Rollins. And his attitude was, 'It's important to make

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<sup>1714</sup> Bobby Broom, personal telephone interview (Evanston, IL and Greeley, CO 17 November 2019)

<sup>1715</sup> Clifton Anderson, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

<sup>1716</sup> Bob Cranshaw, personal interview (New York, NY 15 July 2016)

a living and this is a great way to do it.” He had everybody’s respect and I think his lack of... He wasn’t a purist. He was an amazing jazz artist but also had a ball playing all kinds of commercial music.<sup>1717</sup>

Tom Barney:

Bob spoiled me. I didn't know most bassists played in one style or in one band, because I would see Bob go from Ella Fitzgerald to Eddie Kendricks to Jesus Christ Superstar to the Merv Griffin Show to Frank Sinatra! Thanks to him, I was into all kinds of music. We would also have long talks about musicians' attitudes and the pitfalls to stay away from.<sup>1718</sup>

- Cranshaw continuously encouraged and mentored young musicians and led by example.

Bob Cranshaw and Tom Barney

Since the late '60s, Cranshaw 's most satisfying role has been as a foster father to Barney, an equally successful New York session bassist whose resume includes such names as David Sanborn, Luther Vandross, Eric Clapton, Aretha Franklin, and, presently, Steely Dan. "When Tom got it all together," beams Bob, "I thought, Hell--I can go sell insurance now. I felt total fulfillment as a player." Barney counters, "The life lessons Bob taught me have been as important to my career as the musical lessons."<sup>1719</sup>

Bobby Broom

Bob was always, just a sweetheart. When I was young, when I was middle. Through my whole time knowing him, he’s really been the same. Super supportive, super encouraging. Helpful if need be. In whatever ways he felt he could help. So that’s the feeling. I know that it stayed consistent... there was a feeling of support and comfort and that everything was taken care of on the bottom when playing with Bob. You didn’t have to worry. You had your support there at all times.<sup>1720</sup>

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<sup>1717</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>1718</sup> Chris Jisi, “Bob Cranshaw & Tom Barney: Father Knows Best” *Bass Player*, October 1996, 34.

<sup>1719</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1720</sup> Bobby Broom, personal telephone interview (Evanston, IL and Greeley, CO 17 November 2019)

John Lee

After McCoy (Tyner) broke up the band I had been in for 2 and a half years in late May or early June right after my son was born, I ran into Bob sometime in early June. I said, “Yeah man, I’m not with McCoy anymore, the money’s not coming in like that.” Bob said, “You know what? I’ve got to make this gig on Friday night with Bags and I’m supposed to work with a tenor player named Harold Ousley. He wants electric bass, the way we play. Can you make that gig for me? It’s very important and I don’t know what to do. I said “Sure, sure, I’ll do it.” That was on a Monday. That Thursday I got a call from Bob saying “Hey, stay there by the phone, Dizzy (Gillespie) is getting ready to call you. I said, “Dizzy Gillespie?!” He said, “You’re gonna go to Memphis with him tomorrow.” I said, “Bob, what about Harold?” He said, “Don’t worry about that. I’ll take care of that. This gig (Gillespie) could be a steady gig for you. So, you go on and do that.” What struck me was, he was so concerned about the gig he was sending me on (with Harold Ousley) and happy that I was going to do since he didn’t know who else to call... It was really amazing. His concern about the gig (with Harold Ousley) went out the window when he realized he could get me a steady gig. And that turned into 10 years for me. It's quite amazing. That led to so many other things. It just changed my life completely. Dizzy was one of the best paid gigs at that time, which he knew. I always thought that was such a great thing he did.<sup>1721</sup>

- Cranshaw assisted Mike LeDonne with his daughter Mary, who is disabled and encouraged LeDonne to develop his Disability Pride organization.

Mike LeDonne:

All the things he did for me when my daughter was born. He was right here. The minute we got home, he came over the next day and brought her a sesame street talking doll and was there like, “This is different, but whatever, let’s just get behind this. And we’re going to enjoy this.” I really appreciate that kind of kindness and empathy from him. I mean all my life he was like that. When I did my disability pride, when I started disability pride, he would never miss one. He would show up at every one. And always inspiring me, like we gotta do it again. He wanted to be part of that cause, from his heart and soul.<sup>1722</sup>

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<sup>1721</sup> John Lee, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 26 March 2020)

<sup>1722</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 23 March 2020)

- Cranshaw devoted time for work at Local 802.

Andy Schwartz:

Many jazz musicians didn't do as much freelance work as Bob didn't know the agreements and didn't know the union scene. And their families were sometimes at a loss how to handle certain things and Bob would be the go-to person. People who had very little connection to our union would understand Bob Cranshaw. (They said) "Hey Bob Cranshaw is there. You can go see Bob." he helped so many people. So Many jazz artists and also their families when there was... when somebody passed, he would be the person that the families would come to understand what might be happening in terms of pensions of death benefits or just to give them, make some contact for them. Bob worked on this floor. He was such a warm and welcoming person for the music community, especially jazz, but all musicians really benefited from knowing him... I think that it's important to remember what he provided to musicians in our community. The kind of welcoming ear to their issues and the help that he gave them in navigating professional and personal crises. There will be nobody like that. That's a once in a lifetime opportunity to have somebody like that inside. You know, everybody that worked with him was in his debt.<sup>1723</sup>

### **Tributes and Legacy:**

Many of the people interviewed for this study wished to share their feelings regarding Cranshaw's legacy, and his impact on their lives. They are included here as a tribute to Cranshaw's musical greatness and generous spirit.

Roy McCurdy:

Bob was a sweetheart. I loved playing with him because his time was so beautiful... He was the nicest guy, I loved him, his attitude, you know. He had this beautiful smile, he was always really friendly, all the time. Every time you see him you get a hug; it was really beautiful. He was a pleasure to work with, it was never a hassle. I was so glad when he and Ron came on the band because it changed the whole feeling. Not only the playing but the personal feeling between the musicians...<sup>1724</sup>

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<sup>1723</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

<sup>1724</sup> Roy McCurdy, personal interview (Stanford, CA 17 July 2018)

Frank Owens:

Bob knew everything. He knew all the tunes. And he was a good guy. A nice, kind guy. I'm so sorry that he passed away.<sup>1725</sup>

Bobby Broom:

It took me time and personal growth and perspective to realize who Bob was. Eventually I got it and was thrilled to know him... I just felt comforted by his presence... He didn't make me feel like he had power or authority over me in that way. We just hung out and I'd get what I needed with him, unbeknownst to me. I got cues from him. How to behave, how to carry yourself... I wasn't even aware that I was looking to him and Sonny for a certain example. I was just getting it. Examples of comportment and all of that from Bob in and outside of music. Just being around someone everyday travelling and moving around like that. Seeing how they carried themselves. It can have a huge impact on your life.

Bob was somebody that I looked to and aspired to be like. Just in general... Looking at my own musical situation and as the years went on my career and life and seeing Bob as an example. I don't have specific examples. It was more subtle than that. It comes from being around someone for years on a daily basis...<sup>1726</sup>

Andy Schwartz:

He was the ultimate professional. Always cool, always relaxed, and he was a good role model for a lot of us. Whether we played guitar or bass or rhythm section, drums whatever. It was great to have Bob Cranshaw on the date... He was very giving. Very giving musician. Truly loved making music and being with musicians, sharing with musicians. It was very gratifying to have somebody like that in the room in the studio. He brought a great vibe...

I remember he came down a couple of times when I was subbing at the Lion King and Tom (Barney) was in also. Afterwards, his appreciation and his compliments were so gratifying and not necessary. But he did it and when we talked towards the end (of his life) he kept bringing things up like that. "That time I came to see you and Tom, was so great. What you were doing, and the groove was so great. I just loved it. Just sitting there and listening." It was not necessary from somebody at that level, but it was him. He wanted to make sure you knew you were appreciated for whatever it was that you

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<sup>1725</sup> Frank Owens, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 1 August 2019)

<sup>1726</sup> Bobby Broom, personal telephone interview (Evanston, IL and Greeley CO 17 November 2019)



were bringing. It's really unusual for anyone in our professional colleagues. We all complement each other, (or don't) but Bob made a point of ensuring that everybody knew that he was listening, and he appreciated what they were offering as a musician...

At the end it was heartbreaking... But it wasn't a life that was cut short. It would have been great if he could have lived on to be 100, but the fact is that he had accomplished so much, and he had left such an incredible mark on the music and on his community. He had nothing more to accomplish in most of our eyes. I'm sure he would have loved to be cranking out a groove, but there was nothing left for him to prove. He had proved it all and done it with an incredible spirit and kindness for everybody. He embraced everyone. Even those people that had issues that he would've taken exception to. He never let that get in the way... And when he left the local, I took his name plaque and kept it. I think that it's important to remember what he provided to musicians in our community. The kind of welcoming ear to their issues and the help that he gave them in navigating professional and personal crises. There will be nobody like that. That's a once in a lifetime opportunity to have somebody like that inside. You know, everybody that worked with him was in his debt... He would bring his positivity.

As a union officer, it was my tendency anyway to be thinking first about the players, but Bob definitely was a great example of putting that into practice. The union is nothing more than a guild of players. A community of players that have decided that they all want to have the protections and benefits of a collective bargaining agreement. So, Bob lived it. He really truly believed in the power and strength of a union and he was influential in that regard. He didn't have to say a lot, but by his deeds. I think I had that attitude, but he reinforced it. He made me feel that I was on the right track. And that's a lot, because sometimes you don't get a lot of support in a highly charged political environment inside a union. It's a lot of different agendas, but Bob's was very pure. His agenda was taking care of the members, everything else will fall into place. And he was right. That's why I keep his picture and commune with him when I need it.<sup>1727</sup>

Jerome Harris:

I definitely felt that Bob was a path breaker in that instrumentation aspect. You can probably count on one hand the number of jazz bandleaders of Sonny's generations and stature who were even interested in having bass guitar in the band... I knew there weren't many people in the touring world of prominence who were using bass guitarists in jazz. And the fact that Sonny was using Bob he was a path breaker and I thank my lucky stars that

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<sup>1727</sup> Andy Schwartz, personal interview (New York, NY 25 November 2019)

I got to be in that lineage doing that, playing with Sonny and people of his rank, on that instrument (electric bass) ... The list of credits and recordings that Bob has is long. So, I definitely am very thankful that Bob showed that it can be done at the expressive and functional and sound level that he did it on that instrument. He showed that it can be done, and if it's good enough for Sonny, maybe it's good enough for some other people. So, I'm thankful to Bob and look to him as someone who is a path breaker and prover of concept.<sup>1728</sup>

Clifton Anderson:

Bob affected most musicians that he interacted with. He had a very rewarding and positive relationship as a result of Bob being able to help, support and assist whatever musicians they were, and whatever they were doing. Musically and personally. He was an elder and people who are older, particularly musicians, there are not a lot of Bob Cranshaws. He was unique in his experiences. He played with the greatest jazz musicians and had a lot experience working in different areas of the business, which not all jazz musicians had. Bob was working on television, several TV shows. He was a contractor, he did all of these different things, which brought him in touch with musicians in a way where he could be supportive and wanted to be supportive.

He told me that he was that way because the guys before him, he was really able to rely on because they treated him that way. Milt Hinton and them cats. He was just carrying on, music is a culture, and that's part of the culture. It's not just on the bandstand there's a way that musicians would help each other. Younger musicians learned from older musicians and most of the older musicians would really show the younger musicians how to act, how to carry themselves, how to deal with certain situations. Bob was great at doing that. Directing younger musicians on how to comport themselves in the industry. On the bandstand and off. Bob was such a humble soul. For the greatness that he's had, to be around him, a lot of people don't know about him. He's not extroverted, he just did what he did, and he was the best at doing what he did. For me there were things he could do as a bass player that no other bass player could match. Those things are very subtle.

When you play with somebody that can do certain things on an instrument and especially that commands a rhythm section to be a certain way, to ground the rhythm section. When you play with a bass player like that, and then go and play with other bass players, you can tell the difference. You can tell what's missing sometimes. Or what is not quite the same. It's hard to put it into words. There are a lot of great bass players, and I've played with most of them, but there's just something about Cranshaw. Where he put the beat, his choice of notes, his rhythm, these things are something

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<sup>1728</sup> Jerome Harris, personal interview (New York, NY 26 November 2019)

unique. When he passed, it was too bad for younger bass players because they were losing a resource. He was one of the last bass players that had that certain thing and it's hard to put into words. I feel honored and privileged to play with him and I know what it is from playing with him. I don't hear it in younger musicians, because Bob is not here. He's one of the very few in the world that a young bass player would be able to get with and try to understand what that is and get it in their playing. That's where the music is and how it's passed down.

Bob in some ways, people listen to him and think he played very simple. But he didn't play simple. What he was able to do was very sophisticated. Even on the electric bass. It's very hard to play with Bob for so many years, then go and play with another bass player. It's difficult because you're looking for those certain things that he would just automatically bring out in the music.

Bob was very impactful on many levels. For me I was very happy to have spent the amount of time that I was able to have spent. There is a lesson in that. Bob didn't have to be up front. His name didn't have to be on the marquee. His role was so important that if you approach music in a humbling way, you realize he's no less important than the name on that marquee. He's no less important than the people he made sound as great as they sound. I wouldn't be the same musician without having my experiences with him.

My musicianship and my personality would not be the same. Without the time I spent with Bob. I can't say enough about his impact on me and his impact on so many of the musicians that I know that I watched him influence. Look at his work at the union, working with the jazz foundation, trying to make sure that musicians were taken care of. It was selfless work. What more can you say, that's Bob Cranshaw, and we're all better for it.<sup>1729</sup>

Tom Barney:

I owe him everything. I think his legacy speaks for itself.

Joe Farnsworth:

I got my first chance to see him as an adult with Milt Jackson. Probably with LeDonne in 88-89. He was so great and nice. I approached him and he was so kind. When you're that young it's difficult because you put them on such a high pedestal that you don't even want anything more than just to say hi. I didn't even want a friendship because he was beyond me.

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<sup>1729</sup> Clifton Anderson, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

I might not be right about a lot of things, but there's a guy (Cranshaw) that's the baddest cat ever! Right there, call him up and meet him. AT (Arthur Taylor) used to say about Philly Joe, "He's a tremendous player, but I feel bad that you never met the man because it was beyond his playing." The personality and the person, and it was the same way with Bob. His playing was unbelievable, but you meet him as a person, it's even better. Then, you go hear him play, and it's right on the fuckin' money. It makes complete sense. He never asked for a tune list or a bass solo. He just wanted to fuckin' make the group feel good man. Charts or no charts. You don't even want to put a chart in front of him, you want to hear him play a blues! Just "On a Clear Day" or anything! He could hear it and pick it up.

I couldn't believe that Bob Cranshaw was alive and well, and available to play with. He was on such a high pedestal; you'd think he was out of reach. But in reality, he was closer to reach than anybody else. Maybe it was because of the lack of soloing, but I don't hear people talk about Bob that much. I can't figure it out for the life of me. That was the baddest motherfucker on bass. As far as playing time, sound, and a beat. Big beat Bob, forget about it man. I told every young bass player to go and see him. It's almost like, if you're not making faces and skipping around, it's not hip. But meanwhile he's swinging you into submission.

Mike LeDonne:

That's how Bob was, he followed. That was his talent, to just listen and he was right there playing the right thing all the time. That's something you can't really teach. But that was something he did that put him above a whole lot of other great bass players. It's the same Bob Cranshaw if it's with Stanley Turrentine or a Joe Henderson record with McCoy or with Milt Jackson. So many different styles of music. He just got in there and did his thing. Let's face it he played with everybody and he could do anything. There was nothing he couldn't do. He was on TV; he would do the same thing. On Sesame Street, it made him have to search to make every tune sound good or fit the moment. Other guys might be complaining, but Bob loved it. That shows where Bob was at. Whatever you gave him, he took it and made it better. He would always say I don't care what it is. He's one of the first guys that really believed in me and put his whole heart and soul behind me. Whenever I played with Milt, he made me feel like I was the greatest piano player in the world. You play better when that happens. When you're all together and you love each other and support each other, you're going to play better. It's all about spirit and Bob had that shit.<sup>1730</sup>

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<sup>1730</sup> Mike LeDonne, personal telephone interview (New York, NY and Greeley, CO 24 March 2020)

Sonny Rollins:

I met Bob Cranshaw when I was doing the first Playboy Jazz Festival in Chicago in 1959. Something happened to my bass player and the people in Chicago said, "Try Bob Cranshaw." Bob came by and I heard him play. I played some of the stuff that was in my set then, and I made some modulations, and he was right there with me. He was nimble enough to follow the things that I was doing, which was what I was looking for. I also like to play calypso music, because I have Caribbean heritage, and Bob could play calypso. At that time, you did not run into a lot of jazz musicians who could play calypso, but people had gotten used to hearing me play calypso at my concerts. So, Bob filled that capacity as well, and it endeared

him to me musically. That was an important reason why I always sought him out. He fit the bill.

That was before the time when I went to *The Bridge*. I told Bob that I was going to be taking a hiatus for a while, but that when I formed my band when I came back, I would invite him to play with me. So, he started really working with me during the 1960s, after *The Bridge*. Bob had a young family in New York, so of course he was inclined to look for work in the city and stay with his family. He did a lot of studio work, and all these television shows and things that musicians do, and it made him a fixture in New York. In between those [gigs] I would call him, and sometimes he couldn't do something with me and sometimes he could. Bob was always my first call. As far as his association with me, it was sporadic during our five decades, but we still did a lot together.

There was a development in Brooklyn, right across the street from Pratt Institute, in the Clinton Hill area of Brooklyn. I was living on the Lower East Side, and Bob came by one day when I was about ready to move, and he mentioned this place where he was at and said, "Why don't you come over here?" So, we were able to live in the same development. I know all of Bob's kids, and he knew my family.

It was a great experience playing with him all those years, and he was a great bass player. He did great work, and that's about all we humans can do. The jazz community has lost someone very important. I miss him, both musically and as a good guy with whom I had a good relationship. Bob was a people person: He worked with the Jazz Foundation and with the American Federation of Musicians, and he was always there when musicians needed him. There isn't a musician I know who hasn't played

with Bob Cranshaw at one time or another. I'm sure he'll be missed by more than just me."<sup>1731</sup>

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<sup>1731</sup> Sonny Rollins "Sonny Rollins Remembers Bob Cranshaw"

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



*Institutional Review Board*

DATE: December 11, 2019

TO: Seth Lewis

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1521921-1] We, Not Me: The Musical Life of Bob Cranshaw

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: NOT RESEARCH

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 11, 2019

EXPIRATION DATE:

The University of Northern Colorado IRB has reviewed your protocol and determined that your submission does not meet the federal definition of research according to CFR 45 Part 46.102.

(l) *Research* means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities. For purposes of this part, the following activities are deemed not to be research:

(1) Scholarly and journalistic activities (e.g., oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected.

Project activities as set forth in this submission do not require IRB oversight and approval. However, if your procedures change and/or you decide to generalize your findings, please contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs to further discuss if IRB approval would be needed.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Morse at 970-351-1910 or [nicole.morse@unco.edu](mailto:nicole.morse@unco.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.