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Time Out: Remembering Dave Brubeck

BY PATRICIA KUTZA

It's hard to believe that Dave Brubeck will no longer be playing in concert somewhere on this planet, yet it is safe to say that someone somewhere will be listening to or playing his signature compositions like "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo a la Turk" daily, and some jazz teacher will be urging her students to go out on a limb, stretching the boundaries of their music—just like Dave Brubeck did for the better part of sixty years.



Whether devising unorthodox meters, writing cantatas, or facing down the military, Brubeck was all about breaking the rules. He formed an integrated band of musicians in the Army and later, in civilian life and at the height of his popularity, he was legendary for asking concert promoters who balked at booking his integrated quartet, "What part of 'no' don't you understand?" Not one to compromise his principles, Brubeck, in 1960, proceeded to cancel twenty-three of twenty-five concert dates at colleges in the South rather than bow to their demands—which is a reason his memory elicits such moving words from folks who loved him. Says Brubeck Institute's Executive Director Simon Rowe, "Dave was one of those rare individuals who conducted themselves at such a high level. He not only found a popular audience for his art, he was also able to transmit his core values, working as a strong civil rights advocate as well as being such an important cultural diplomat for the arts."

Rowe says that it's fitting that the Brubeck Institute, located on the University of Pacific campus where Brubeck graduated in 1942, offers such a well-rounded

program, so reminiscent of its namesake. The Brubeck Collection, consisting of Brubeck and his wife and collaborator Iola Brubeck's correspondence, legal and business documents, and much more memorabilia, offers a wonderful window into Brubeck's world. Visitors are welcome to research the Brubeck Collection weekdays at the Holt-Atherton Special Collections, located in the University of Pacific's library. Part of the Brubeck Oral History Project, as well as video footage from Brubeck's many tour engagements, are now also accessible online.

In a January 2013 event held at the Bob Hope Theater and created in partnership with Stockton's Downtown Alliance, two thousand Stockton elementary schoolchildren were treated to the sounds of The Brubeck Institute Jazz Quintet, up-and-coming musicians sponsored by the Brubeck Institute's Fellowship Program. The Institute's Summer Jazz Colony, a one-week, full-scholarship, intensive jazz immersion for high school students with promise, realizes the vision that Brubeck shared with the University of Pacific's



Head of Special Collections Shan Sutton back in 2007. Brubeck said that he would like to be remembered as a person "...who opened doors. That's about all I could ask is take a good look, see where you can go now where somebody else had to knock hard."

"We are honored that Dave chose his alma mater, the University of the Pacific, to be the place where his correspondence and musical recordings and memorabilia are archived," says Rowe. "We've created a living institute in his honor, not just a catacombs for his effects—a

testament to his sense of adventure and his wonderfully creative spirit."

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Brubeck Institute, University of the Pacific
3601 Pacific Ave
Stockton, (209) 946-3196
The Brubeck Collection: go.pacific.edu/specialcollections



"Take Five" Takes Us Back

Dave Brubeck's signature sounds made an impact on so many musicians. San Francisco Bay Area-based Kenny Hawkins—band leader, flutist, saxophonist, and composer for the Kenny Hawkins & Groovin' Deep Music Project—shares:

"When Dave Brubeck recorded 'Take Five' in 1959, it swept not only the jazz scene, but also the American music scene in general. At that time, many youngsters like myself had never heard the name Dave Brubeck, but 'Take Five' made Brubeck's name familiar to me and many other Americans. 'Take Five' was a brilliant composition for a variety of reasons. The melody was both beautiful and catchy but also had changes that were a bit tricky. Also, this tune

was written in the unusual meter of 5/4. Most Americans were used to hearing tunes in 4/4, or 3/4 or 6/8. I would say that 'Take Five' was probably the first odd metered tune to become popular in jazz and became one of the pieces of music that all musicians felt compelled to learn.

Today, more than fifty years have passed since 'Take Five' was composed and it still remains beautiful and interesting. Dave Brubeck added many great compositions and contributions to America's rich musical heritage. But, probably like many other Americans, when I think of Dave Brubeck, I immediately go to 'Take Five.' I was in my grandmother's living room with when I first heard it and those memories still make me feel joy."