



## Podcast 6: West Coast and similar sounds

**Terminology: labelling musical genres can be kind of vague and/or too limiting, but here are a couple of quotes worth considering:**

Brian L. Knight, in the *Vermont Review* online says:

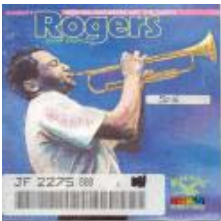
"The West Coast jazz sound was defined by a laid back, swinging feel. The style also referred to as "Cool" jazz. The music was soothing to the ears and created an overall feeling of relaxation. The East Coast sound, led by John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Eric Dolphy, was much more intense and frenzied. Compared to the hour-long solos of Coltrane, the West Coast sound was much more accessible to the general public. The epicenter for the development of the West Coast sound could be found in the clubs and studios of Los Angeles."

Shorty Rogers, in a 1983 interview with Les Tomkins had this to say:

"I feel the so-called West Coast Jazz era was a good thing. But we are musicians and jazz players, and the main thing we wanted out of life was to keep occupied in the thing we wanted to do—to play jazz—and what it did was to offer this opportunity. I mean, we were busy just having the greatest time of our lives—recording, playing at the Lighthouse. It's so rare making a living doing what you love to do. I just said: "Thank you, Lord—this is great". In my mind I was more wrapped up in just having fun than worrying

about: is it West Coast or East Coast, and are we doing something that's better than something else? I didn't have time to think that way; it was more important for me to concentrate my thoughts on: "I'll have a record session next week—I have to get the arrangements done. I want to compose a tune; I've got a little idea, but the tune's not finished—I have to keep working on it". That's the world I lived in.

A lot of people asked me: was West Coast better than East Coast? But we weren't engaged in a battle—no way. I'm from the East Coast, anyhow, and as I think about the music that was labelled as West Coast Jazz . . . well, for instance, at that time I think Al Cohn was the strongest influence we had. I just loved and adored what Miles Davis did with his ten-piece band, and I wanted to do something that sounded that way . . . I guess, with each individual . . . if you talk to twenty guys who were involved in music in the West Coast at that time, you're going to get twenty different answers, but I do feel this thing of just seeking enjoyment and fun and being able to express yourself was the majority of what was going on, really. You know, we were playing non-stop."



### **Infinity Promenade Shorty Rogers and his Giants**

Recorded March 26, 1953 and available on CD on the Bluebird album *Short Stops*.

TRUMPET: Conrad Gozzo, Maynard Ferguson, Pete Candoli, John Howell,

TROMBONE: Milt Bernhart, John Haliburton, Harry Betts

FRENCH HORN: John Graas

TUBA: Gene Englund

ALTO SAXOPHONE: Art Pepper, Bud Shank

TENOR SAXOPHONE: Jimmy Giuffre

BARITONE SAXOPHONE: Bob Cooper

PIANO: Marty Paich

BASS: Curtis Counce

DRUMS: Shelly Manne



### **No Moon at All Jeri Southern**

ORCHESTRA: Directed by Ralph Burns

A midwesterner with a wonderful (innocently sexy) voice, whose style fits well with the west coast mood, in my opinion, Jeri Southern achieved moderate popularity during the 50s and early sixties. She was a good friend of Peggy Lee. This track is available on a retrospective of her work for Decca, *The Very Thought of You: The Decca Years, 1951-1957*.

For an interesting discussion of her life as well as a review of this album, see

[http://www.mrlucky.com/songbirds/html/sep99/9909\\_southern.html](http://www.mrlucky.com/songbirds/html/sep99/9909_southern.html)

**A Theme of Four Values Stan Kenton Orchestra**

Recorded in March of 1954 and available on CD on the Capitol double CD re-release *Kenton Showcase: The Music of Bill Russo and The Music of Bill Holman*.

Kenton, sometimes to the dismay of more traditional jazz enthusiasts, constantly experimented with different sounds and arrangements, and was sometimes perceived as unswinging and stodgy. These albums feature two of his more important arrangers in Russo and Holman.

**Angel Eyes The Four Freshmen**

WITH THE KENTON ORCHESTRA

The harmonies that influenced Brian Wilson are obvious on this one, recorded in 1955 and available on the Capitol Collectors Series CD *The Four Freshmen*

**Little Girl Blue Stan Getz (tenor)**

WITH GARY BURTON ON VIBES

This is one of my favorite Rodgers and Hart tunes, recorded in 1964. I took it from the Verve compilation CD *Isn't it Romantic: The Rodgers & Hart Songbook*.

**Blues for Brando Shorty Rogers and his Giants**

Recorded July 14, 1953 and available on CD on the Bluebird album *Short Stops*, with similar personnel as *Infinity Promenade*

**Past the Age of Innocence Chris Connor**

Recorded in 1956, available on a double CD rerelease on Collectables Jazz Classics of two Atlantic albums, *Chris Connor: I Miss You So* and *Chris Connor: Witchcraft*

**Four Brothers Art Pepper + 11**

Recorded May 12, 1959 for Contemporary Records, and re-issued on vinyl by Fantasy Records

TENORS: Art Pepper, Richie Kamuca

TRUMPETS: Pete Candoli, Jack Sheldon

TROMBONES: Dick Nash, Bob Enevoldsen

ALTO: Charlie Kennedy

FRENCH HORN: Vince de Rosa

BARITONE: Med Flory

PIANO: Russ Freeman

BASS: Joe Mondragon

DRUMS: Mel Lewis

**Five Brothers Gerry Mulligan Quartet**

Recorded at the Haig in Los Angeles, 1953

BARITONE: Gerry Mulligan

TRUMPET: Chet Baker

DRUMS: Larry Bunker

BASS: Carson Smith

**Lover Man Warne Marsh et al**

Recorded in L.A. in 1954, for Capitol and reissued on CD featuring also Lennie Tristano, *Intuition*

TENORS: Warne Marsh, Ted Brown

PIANO: Ronnie Ball

BASS: George Tucker

DRUMS: Jeff Morton

***The Man I Love* The Don Fagerquist Nonette**

Recorded in 1955 and available on a reissue combining earlier albums featuring both The Dave Pell Octet and the Don Fagerquist Nonette, / *Had the Craziest Dream*, on Capitol

ARRANGEMENT: Marty Paich

TRUMPET: Don Fagerquist

TENORS: Bill Holman, Zoot Sims, Dave Pell

BARITONE: Bob Gordon

GUITAR: Vernon Polk

PIANO: Donn Trenner

BASS: Buddy Clark

DRUMS: Bill Richmond

***Teri* The Gerald Wilson Big Band**

Recorded in 1963 on Pacific Jazz (translucent red vinyl!) album *Moment of Truth*.

(Teri is the name of one of Gerald Wilson's daughters.)

I don't know if this one has been reissued on CD.

Gerald Wilson headed one of the few mostly black bands associated with the west coast sound, (although he should not be limited to this classification) and is an under-appreciated bandleader and arranger, in my opinion.

This track isn't particularly representative of the album but features nice guitar work from Joe Pass.

***Just the Way I Am* June Christy with Stan Kenton**

Mid-fifties date featuring just June and Stan, *Duet*, on Capitol

The great tune was written by Bobby Troup, who also wrote *Route 66*, and was married for a while to Julie London.

***Summer Sequence, Part IV (Early Autumn)* Woody Herman Band**

Ralph Burns wrote and arranged it, recorded in 1947.

Stan Getz notable on Tenor, among others

From a Columbia CD compilation of various periods of early Herman work, *The Essence of Woody Herman*

***Early Autumn* Woody Herman and his Orchestra**

A different arrangement of the previous track, recorded in 1948

THIS particular version taken from a Capitol reissue on vinyl: Capitol Classics Vol. 9, Woody Herman and his Orchestra, *Early Autumn*

This version got more airplay, I think, and was a big boost for Stan Getz's career.

***Pirouette*, Chet Baker and the Lighthouse Allstars**

Reissued on vinyl by Fantasy, originally on Contemporary, the album is titled *Witch Doctor*

Recorded at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach, Ca in 1953

TRUMPETS: Chet Baker, Rolf Ericson

ALTO AND BARITONE: Bud Shank

TENOR: Bob Cooper

PIANO: Claude Williamson

BASS: Howard Rumsey (who was also the club's owner)

DRUMS: Shelly Manne