

**Cal
Tjader**

Sextet

**Stan
Getz**

Fantasy
3266

HIGH FIDELITY



Cal Tjader/Stan Getz - Sextet

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Ginza Samba 11:01
(Vince Guaraldi) Cireco Music-BMI | 4. Crow's Nest 8:22 |
| 2. I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face 4:00
(Lerner-Loewe) Chappell & Co.-ASCAP | 5. Liz-Anne 3:49 |
| 3. For All We Know 5:45
(Coots-Lewis) EMI Feist Catalog/Cromwell Music, Inc.-ASCAP | 6. Big Bear 4:35 |
| | 7. My Buddy 5:15
(Kahn-Donaldson) Donaldson Publ. Co./
Gilbert Keyes Music Co.-ASCAP |

All selections composed by Cal Tjader (Cireco Music-BMI), except as indicated.

In reissuing records on CD it is standard practice to include alternate takes and previously unreleased tunes. This album has no additional music. If you had been the producer, which of these seven pieces would you have told Tjader, Getz and friends to do over? What we have here is 42 minutes and 47 seconds of perfection, a demonstration that six masters who have never before played together as a group can produce timeless music in the common language of jazz.

Cal Tjader and Stan Getz were acquaintances going back to the late 1940s and early '50s—Tjader's days as the drummer in the Dave Brubeck Trio. On a west coast tour in 1954, Getz starred in a tenor saxophone summit with Zoot Sims and Wardell Gray, and Tjader played vibraphone in George Shearing's sextet. They jammed informally and wanted to record together, but their schedules did not permit it until early February of 1958, when Getz played the Black Hawk in Tjader's home base, San Francisco. In his rhythm section, Getz had the experienced 26-year-old pianist Walter Norris and two 21-year-olds who had been making waves in Los Angeles. The bassist, Scott LaFaro, had worked with Chet Baker, Barney Kessel, and Howard Rumsey's Lighthouse All-Stars. A few days before the Black Hawk gig he had played impressively on a Victor Feldman record date. Drummer Billy Higgins, who had backed a variety of artists including Jimmy Witherspoon and Dexter Gordon, was a member of Ornette Coleman's bounds-breaking quartet.

Getz was signed to Norman Granz's Clef Records. That could have been an obstacle but, fortuitously, the year before, Fantasy Records had loaned Paul Desmond to Granz for a quartet record with Gerry Mulligan. In those days, labels tended to keep a tight rein on their artists. The contractual *quid pro quo* cleared the way for Stan and Cal to record their impromptu group. Fantasy booked the Marines Memorial Auditorium, whose benevolent acoustics made it the site of several of the label's recordings. Sol Weiss, who owned the little label with his brother Max, engineered the date.

For the recording session on February 8, Getz brought LaFaro and Higgins to join Tjader, Vince Guaraldi, and Eddie Duran. Guaraldi was the pianist in Tjader's quartet. Duran played guitar on

several of Tjader's Fantasy albums and worked in Guaraldi's trio with bassist Dean Reilly. Getz had turned 31 six days before. At 32, Tjader and Duran were the old men of the group. Duran had played casual engagements with Getz, but this was his first encounter with LaFaro and Higgins. Ralph J. Gleason's liner notes for the original LP release of the album suggest that there were two takes on a couple of tunes, but there is no evidence of that in the Fantasy/Concord vaults, and Duran doesn't recall it that way. He is the surviving member of this remarkable ad hoc band.

"There was no rehearsal before the date," he said, "no alternates, no second takes. It went very smoothly. It just kind of fell into place. The feeling was happy and relaxed."

Anticipating that the session would start late and run long, as most recording dates do, Ralph Gleason took his time getting there and found that it was almost over. It wrapped up in less than three hours. Clearly, Getz, Higgins, and LaFaro had no trouble reading the new pieces Guaraldi and Tjader wrote for the date. The two cherished standard songs were familiar to all of the musicians.

Guaraldi's "Ginza Samba" predates by five years Getz's "Desafinado" with guitarist Charlie Byrd, the recording that opened the bossa nova floodgates in the U.S. In its first and last choruses "Ginza" is akin to what Brazilians like João Gilberto, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Baden Powell, and Vinicius de Moraes were doing in Rio in the late 1950s as they brought fresh ideas to the traditional samba. Did Vince know in San Francisco in 1957 what the Brazilians were up to? Probably not. More likely, it's an uncanny example of parallel musical thinking. The interior choruses revert to straight 4/4 time with extended solos by Tjader, Getz, Guaraldi, and Duran. The way Stan plays here must be what Eddie means by "happy and relaxed."

LaFaro has only one solo on the album, five remarkable choruses on Tjader's blues "Crow's Nest." His note choices, time sense and chromatic thinking make it easy to understand why, when pianist Bill Evans found LaFaro in 1959, he was able to put together a trio that could execute music he had been conceptualizing for years. The Evans trio initiated a profound alteration in the thinking of modern jazz musicians. LaFaro played a crucial role in the breakthrough.

"Scotty was the bassist who introduced a different way of playing," Duran said. "He didn't seem to play many root notes. He'd always find something else. It was like he was sitting down at the piano and playing notes that just fit into the feeling of the tune. With him, it was as if I was working with a horn player. He could play a counter-line going through a harmony and still swing. Think of the things he did with Bill."

Higgins does not solo on the album, making his contribution by keeping perfect time. Through much of his career he was closely identified with the iconoclastic Coleman, a patriarch of free jazz. Duran heard Higgins as anything but a free-jazz drummer.

"When he was playing behind the group, it was a pulse," Eddie said. "He didn't feel that he had to find places where he could drop bombs. He listened to everyone. He wasn't a loud player. He was very sensitive. I like musicians who feel that we are a group when we're playing. With Billy, the group feeling was always there."

From the time he left Shearing in 1954 and became a leader, Tjader was a pioneer in melding Afro-Cuban music with jazz. That role brought him widespread admiration and his greatest fame, but in his bands he alternated mainstream jazz with Latin music, highlighting the vibes playing that made him one of the instrument's most inventive and hard-swinging soloists. With Guaraldi in his group, the two thrived on rhythm. Cal was also a premier interpreter of ballads; witness his lyricism and harmonic surprises in "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face." He composed frequently, never with more tenderness than the waltz "Liz-Anne," named for his and his wife Pat's daughter.

Getz went through hard times in the mid-1950s as he fought a longtime heroin addiction. On the 1954 tour that he and Tjader shared, he was in the throes of cold-turkey withdrawal that culminated in an arrest following an aborted—and widely publicized—drugstore incident in Seattle. Typical of Stan throughout his career, no matter how low he sank he played brilliantly. By the time of the recording with Cal, except for a backslide or two the affair with heroin was over. A new one with alcohol was in his future, but in San Francisco in the winter of '58 his life was on an even keel. He was dancing in sunshine.

“I loved Stan,” Eddie said. He could get annoyed easily, you know. He didn’t pull any punches; you could always tell where you stood. But when he got up and played, he played. On this date, he was feeling good. It showed.”

And the feeling was on display the rest of Getz’s life with dazzling playing nearly to the end in 1991. Tjader continued to lead superior bands. He recorded extensively, including memorable dates with his fellow giant of Latin music Eddie Palmieri. Cal died in 1982.

As for the sidemen, Guaraldi’s recording of “Cast Your Fate to the Wind” and his string of *Charlie Brown* hits made him famous and beloved as a player and composer. In his short life, LaFaro’s work with the Bill Evans Trio astounded musicians. By example of his genius, he established a new school of bass playing. Higgins was a key figure as the Ornette Coleman group loosened established jazz norms. He was in demand by John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Cedar Walton, and dozens of other musicians because of his unfailing swing and supportiveness. As this is written, Duran in his mid-80s is still one of the best guitarists in jazz and performs with his saxophonist wife Mad.

From the LP era, there are many examples of indifferent recordings by makeshift bands—jam sessions filling out the 12-inch vinyl with endless choruses. In this joint venture, planning, preparation, six major talents and a spontaneous compatibility bordering on magic, made the Tjader-Getz collaboration a classic. It’s good to hear it again.

—Doug Ramsey

Doug Ramsey, the author of *Take Five: The Public and Private Lives of Paul Desmond* (Parkside), is a winner of the Jazz Journalists Associations’ Lifetime Achievement Award. He blogs about jazz and other matters at www.dougramsey.com

When Stan Getz played the Black Hawk in San Francisco early in 1958, the time was ripe for the recording of an album that had been under discussion for a long, long time.

Cal Tjader had been an admirer of Stan Getz ever since the latter first shot to national jazz fame as the tenor saxophone star of the Woody Herman band and Stan had heard Cal and played with him at various sessions since Cal first went out as a member of the Dave Brubeck Trio. However, recording Stan with the Tjader group wasn’t easy. They never seemed to be in the same part of the country at the same time. It wasn’t until Stan came to the Black Hawk to fulfill a short engagement, during a period when Cal was laying off prior reforming his group, that it was possible to work it out.

Getz’s group at the Black Hawk featured two young jazz players who were totally unknown then: bassist Scotty LaFaro and drummer Billy Higgins. But they gassed Tjader as they as gassed everyone one heard them in the club. And it was decided to use them on the date along with Vince Guaraldi, Tjader’s regular pianist, and Eddie Duran, the wonderful young guitarist who has been growing in stature in recent years for his in-person appearances and his work on his Fantasy albums.

Most jazz record dates, as anyone who has ever attended one knows, begin late and are one long tortured attempt to get enough material done right to fit on one LP. Once in a long while a date will jell from note one. This was one of those dates. A critic journeying across the Bay to San Francisco to catch what he thought would be the last two hours of the date almost missed the whole thing. The album was recorded in record time (no pun intended) with less than three hours work. No tune, except two, had more than one take and even then it was a tossup as to which to use.

Getz seemed to blend with Tjader as if they had been playing together for years. Vince Guaraldi dug in, feeding the solo horns chords and taking his own solos with the certainty usually known only to victims of long practice. Billy Higgins and Scott LaFaro read the charts for the original tunes and though they had written them themselves. And especially the waltz, which is not always the easiest thing for a rhythm section to handle.

After the session, the tapes were played back for the men and they sat around entranced, occasionally casting glances of approval the one another. “You’re really cookin’ there,” Higgins said to Guaraldi more than once, and everybody was gassed as the way Tjader and Getz played.

The selection of tunes was particularly favorable for both Getz and Tjader and their special ability to switch from lyric smoothness to gutty swing. On the opening ballad the lyric side of their natures is apparent and on “Ginza,” “Big Bear,” and “Crow’s Nest” you can hear them down low and funky with the best.

I’d like to draw particular attention to the way in which LaFaro plays bass behind Stan Getz on “For All We Know,” for the way in which Getz leads the rest of the band into figures behind Tjader on “Ginza,” and for the fine bass solos on “Crow’s Nest.”

As to the work of Tjader and Getz, I lead towards Stan’s lovely playing on the opening ballad and on the waltz (Let me play this for you,” he said afterwards, “it’s so beautiful”) and for the way in which Cal gets such a snakey, bluesish feel in “For All We Know.”

Neither Getz nor Tjader need any introduction to jazz fans. They are now, at a relatively early age (they were born in 1927 and 1925 respectively) jazz veterans. Vince Guaraldi and Eddie Duran have been heard before on Fantasy LPs and Duran may surprise any doubters with his work here. But mark down the names of Higgins and LaFaro. They are youngsters in a young man’s art. Higgins is from Los Angeles, only 21 and a student of Bill Douglass and Lennie McBrown. He’s been playing only since 1954. LaFaro is from Geneva, NY, has worked with Buddy Morrow and Buddy DeFranco and has been playing for four years. Higgins is a painter as well as a musician and LaFaro says he’s too busy for hobbies. He’s catching up on Bird recordings, he adds. Both these men will make their mark in jazz history. Their technique and their ability to blow with the veterans on this date is almost frightening in light of their youth. It is also a tribute to the intelligence and talent of the younger generation of jazz musicians.

As Vince Guaraldi, the swarthy Borgia of the piano, put it when the date was over, “When you got it, you got it.” And they have.

—**Ralph J. Gleason**

These notes appeared on the original album liner.

Stan Getz—tenor saxophone

Cal Tjader—vibes

Vince Guaraldi—piano

Eddie Duran—guitar

Scott LaFaro—bass

Billy Higgins—drums

Recorded in San Francisco, CA; February 8, 1958.

REISSUE:

Produced by **Nick Phillips**

24-bit Remastering—**Joe Tarantino** (Joe Tarantino Mastering, Berkeley, CA)

Booklet Notes by **Doug Ramsey**

Editorial—**Rikka Arnold**

Project Assistance—**Abbey Anna, Chris Clough**

Design—**Andrew Pham**



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- 3 **FOR ALL WE KNOW** 5:45
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STAN GETZ—tenor saxophone
CAL TJADER—vibes
VINCE GUARALDI—piano
EDDIE DURAN—guitar
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BILLY HIGGINS—drums

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There is no guarantee that you can throw a collection of gifted musicians into a studio and emerge at the end of the day or night with a great recording. Plenty of dull all-star jam sessions on record prove otherwise. Sometimes, however, the quick mix-and-match approach works. There are few instances of its working better than in this encounter between Cal Tjader and Stan Getz. No one could have predicted that the result would be one of the finest albums of both men's careers. The quality of the other participants improved the odds, even though in 1958 none of them was, by any stretch of the term, an all-star. Vince Guaraldi and Eddie Duran had achieved small national reputations, but Scott LaFaro and Billy Higgins were barely known outside of Los Angeles jazz circles. With the uncanny ESP that sometimes operates in meetings of like-minded strangers who happen to be first-rate jazz artists, they coalesced behind Getz and Tjader and worked hand-in-glove with one another. Guaraldi's "Ginza" and Tjader's "Liz-Anne" have become jazz standards. Remastered with 24-bit technology, this album is a jazz classic in every respect.



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CAL STAN TJADER-GETZ SEXTET



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Ralph J. Gleason, *Editor*

JAM SESSION (G. P. Putnam's Sons)

THE RHYTHM SECTION (San Francisco Chronicle)

SIDE ONE	SIDE TWO
1. I'VE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO HER FACE (Lerner-Loewe) (Chappel) ASCAP 3:59	1. CROW'S NEST (Tjader) (Cireco) BMI 8:22
2. FOR ALL WE KNOW (Coots-Lewis) (Feist) ASCAP 5:45	2. LIZ ANNE (Tjader) (Cireco) BMI... 3:47
3. GINZA (Guaraldi) (Cireco) BMI..... 9:18	3. BIG BEAR (Tjader) (Cireco) BMI.... 4:33
	4. MY BUDDY (Kahn-Donaldson) (Remick) ASCAP 5:18

OTHER CAL TJADER LPs ON FANTASY	
3202 MAMBO WITH TJADER	3232 CAL TJADER QUINTET (LATIN)
3211 TJADER PLAYS JAZZ	3241 JAZZ AT THE BLACK HAWK
3216 RITMO CALIENTE	3250 LATIN KICK
3221 TJADER PLAYS MAMBO	3253 CAL TJADER (JAZZ)
3227 CAL TJADER QUARTET (JAZZ)	3262 MAS RITMO CALIENTE