

Peter Herbolzheimer - A Portrait

The same year that Peter Herbolzheimer was born, Glenn Miller had just joined Ray Noble, Benny Goodman recorded King Porter Stomp, and played with his band at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles. And right at the beginning of this great Swing Period - which gave the world the star that Peter Herbolzheimer was to follow - a certain Elvis Presley drew his first breath in Memphis.

Many years later people were talking about Jazz rock or Fusion, both of which were more a departure from, than a combination of, separate elements. The guitar and piano were replaced by other instruments from the rhythm section, and took on the tasks of providing melody and sound. The traditional saxophone passages were then considered too soft for the new sphere of powerful rock rhythms, and finally, the complicated static chords, favoured by the big bands in the bop era, made way for more mobile lines often blown in unison.

The founding of "Rhythm Combination & Brass" took place at that time. In the big band sphere, Peter Herbolzheimer took a first consequential step and gave equal focus to the rhythm and brass sections - both in numbers and inequality. Among composers and arrangers he remains to this day one of the most original and definitive figures for this form of music and its transposition for the big band.

After many long years and magnificent concerts, festival appearances and recordings, the pure Jazzrock chapter was finally closed for Peter Herbolzheimer and the RC&B. The formation grew again into the classic big band format, without once committing a note of stylistic nostalgia to the music. Peter Herbolzheimer, as composer and arranger for this newly won musical mobility, ensured that the stylistic clarity and, naturally, the quality of the solos by his renowned musicians, were united with a sure feel for the historic and entertaining value of Swing. This recipe was applauded by audiences, and won a flood of enthusiasm from the most knowledgeable of Peter's musical contemporaries. Mel Lewis wanted to record with Herbolzheimer. Nancy Wilson wanted to sing during her German appearances exclusively with the RC&B. Clark Terry raved after his ballads recording -Clark After Dark - about Herbolzheimer's unsurpassed arrangements.

This all seems to be a jazz-orientated success story, but there is also a density of musical greatest at a broad level to be considered. One still remembers the work that Herbolzheimer and his men did in the Dr Bielek TV shows. Stars of the greatest diversity, from the most varied of musical fields, were to be accompanied there, and the music was always well received by the public.

One has been able to enjoy the Rhythm Combination & Brass for a long time at home in Germany. Not personally, perhaps - there would hardly be room and the travel costs alone for the hand-picked group from a half dozen European and overseas countries would really be too high. But luckily there are recordings. Very good ones, as a matter of fact, of Peter Herbolzheimer and his unique band playing his marvellous arrangements.

Also just as unique - and that is worldwide - is an orchestra that was formed in 1987, and was accompanied from its inception to the present day by Peter Herbolzheimer. We are speaking here of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Germany - known for short in this country as the BuJazzO, which is appropriate to the German language initials.

This orchestra is the platform for young people about to embark upon a professional career, and be able to gather some unique experience - in both solo and orchestral capacities. BuJazzO, which has become one of the very best addresses for young musicians, has fostered most of the renowned following generations of players now making an impact on the scene. There is hardly a musical organization in existence without former BuJazzO musicians. And many prize winners have emerged from this "academy of fine jazz."

Many tours overseas have established the reputation of this orchestra, which has no equal anywhere in the world - and there are many CDs as marvelous witnesses to the fact. The Federal Republic of Germany sends this formation more and more frequently to official occasions abroad, where they are likely to receive more notice than symphonic ensembles, which have hardly been registered over the last couple of decades.

Both orchestras, the RC&B and the BuJazzO, are unique and have permanently marked, formed and changed the music scene in Germany - and the world.





MILESTONES

- 1935 PH born on the last day of the year in Bucharest
- 1951 Move to Germany; learns to play the guitar
- 1953 School and graduation in Detroit, USA
- 1956 Training as technical draughtsman at General Motors; teaches guitar at Wurlitzer
- 1957 Return to Germany
- 1958 Music studies at Nuremberg
- 1959 Change to trombone
- 1960 Engagements in US clubs with own first group, and with several German radio bands in the years following
- 1968 Among others, with Hans Koller at the Hamburg Schauspielhaus
- 1969 Founding of the RHYTHM COMBINATION & BRASS
- 1972 Double album recorded Christmas '70 and 71 from the domicile in Munich My Kind of Sunshine, on MPS; Jazz East-West in Nuremberg; Berlin Jazz Days; composition of introductory music for the Munich Olympics with Dieter Reith and Jerry van Rooyen
- 1973 Receives Cross of Honour and Ribbon of the Republic of Germany and a Golden Disc for the LP
- 1974 1st prize in the CONCOURS INTERNATIONAL DE COMPOSITION DE THEMES DE JAZZ in Monaco for a twelve-tone composition
- 1975/76 The RC&B chosen as Germany's number one big band by readers of Jazz Forum (this remains constant for many years)
- 1976 ZDF Jazz Gala with, among others, Gerry Mulligan, Stan Getz and Nat Adderley, Toots Thielemans, Albert Mangelsdorf Wolfgang Dauner, Volker Kriegel
- 1977 Jazz Gala Tour with, among others, Gary Burton, Clark Terry and Albert Mangelsdorf; Antibes Jazz Festival; the Phono Academy "Artist of the Year" award
- 1978 Begin of the many years of cooperation with Dr Alfred Biolek in "Bio's Bahnhof"; Grosser Deutscher Schallplattenpreis (Germany's most important German recording award) for the LP Touch Down
- 1979 Jazz Gala Tour with Art Farmer, Chuck Findley, Tony Coe, Don Menza, Herb Geller, N.H.Ø. Pedersen; opening concert for the German/Polish Culture Weeks in Warsaw
- 1980 Music for the film "Das Traumhaus" from Ulrich Schamoni
- 1981 Begin of the cooperation with the SWF, Baden Baden (radio and TV)
- 1982 Rock 'n' Swing Tour of Germany
- 1983 Various short tours in Germany; two concerts in the Brussels Jazz Club
- 1984 Music for the TV series So Lebten sie alle Tage from Wolfgang Menge (WDR); German tours, among others at the Burghausen Festival with a 45-minute TV special; PH wrote the music arrangements and conducted the WDR Big Band for the WDR - TV/radio production Harlem Story
- 1987 Warsaw Jazz Jamboree; first own TV show "Music Unlimited – Peter Herbolzheimer and Guests"; founding of the BuJazzO under the direction of PH
- 1988 ZDF Jazz Club; recording at the Leonberg Town Hall; concert in Prague; plays at the Telestar Awards
- 1989 Opening of the International Media Fair Berlin; ARD TV live from the ICC
- 1990 Den Haag North Sea Festival; appearance with Stan Getz; 20th Jubilee Tour with RC&B and guest star Chaka Khan; double LP/CD 20 Years of the RC&B various radio and TV recordings



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1991 Tour in Portugal with BuJazzO; tour with RC&B in the new Republic states; first concert at the Leipzig Gewandhaus; production and concerts of Konstantin Wecker Classics with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra

1992 Orchestration and conducting the film music from Konstantin Wecker for the award-winning film Schtonk; with BuJazzO at the World Exhibition in Seville and at the Olympiade in Barcelona; live TV appearance with Al Jarreau and Eartha Kitt in SAT 1; producer of one of the most successful Konstantin Wecker CDs: Uferlos

1993 Radio and TV production, concert and a CD with the Ljubljana Radio Big Band. CD Friends and Silhouettes with guests Charlie Mariano and Dave Friedman; concert tour with RC&B, among others, in Brussels and in Holland; BujazzO Tour of the Baltic and St Petersburg

1994 RC&B Tour of Germany and Switzerland; concert with BuJazzO in Boston; opening of the House of History in Bonn; orchestrations for Herbie Hancock with the Metropole Orchestra for the North Sea Festival

1995 RC&B 25th Jubilee Tour with guest star Dianne Reeves

1996 Releasing of the fabulous CD "Colors Of A Band"

1997 BuJazzO Tour of South Africa, the official German representative at the Coronation Celebrations of King Letsie III of Lesotho; German Music Prize from the Music Publishers' Association; jubilee celebrations and concert at the Cologne Philharmonic for the 10th anniversary of the BuJazzO

1998 March 10, City of Frankfurt Music Prize Award

1999 concerts RCB with Marlana Shaw, Dianne Reeves, Greetje Kauffeld in Munich for the BR, South Eastern European Tour in Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Turkey, Roumania, Tschechia with BuJazzO

2000 Jazzpreis Burghausen, Düsseldorf Jazz Rallye.

2001 Pour le Mérit Cross in Germany

2004 concerts with the Belgrade Radio Orchestra.
Foundation and leading the Youth Jazz Orchestra in Riga
South Africa Tour with the German Youth Jazz Orchestra. Concerts with the Youth Orchestra Jeuness Musicale in Zagreb

2005 Tour in Bulgaria, Albania, Romania with the German Youth Jazz Orchestra. Leading and working with the Wattwill Youth Orchestra Switzerland. October concerts and recording with the Terassa Big Band together with Judy Niemack

2006 Leading the European Jaz Academy in Heek. Tour in Ukrajnia

2007 Starting with Masterclass European Big Band Academy Heek, Life Time Award Jazz in Bucharest. Concert with Romanian Radio Orchestra, concert with the San Cugat Symphony Orchestra and the Terassa Bigband on the Jazz Festival, concert with the Belgrade Radio Orchestra in Belgrade and at the Jazz Festival in Mitrovicze, Kossovo.

During all these years numerous tours with Rhythm Combination & Brass.