

Interview with Al Rose  
Reel I  
Feb. 3, 1975

Also present: Richard B. Allen  
Digest: Ralph Adamo  
Checked: Richard B. Allen

[ Recorded in William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive]

RBA asks for Al Rose's full name. It is Etienne Alphonse Delarose Lascaux. RBA says that for years he thought it was E. Albert Rose, and AR explains that he did use that name for years "for complex reasons".

AR was born in New Orleans in Touro Infirmary. Feb. 3, 191<sup>6</sup> ?]

RBA wishes AR a happy birthday.

RBA asks where AR has been a "disc jockey." AR demurs at the term. He did run a radio show, "Journeys Into Jazz," which began in 1946 in Philadelphia. The show is now syndicated through Southern Illinois University Radio Network. AR explains that the show is "a mini-series of programs about jazz and jazz musicians on which records are played for illustration." It was on WFIL, ABC in Philadelphia. There was "a little Eastern network "that covered ABC affiliates in the area. "And I had a pretty big audience back in the forties."

RBA asks about WPEN. It was also a Philadelphia radio station. AR was a frequent guest on the station when it was headquarters of a show called "Juke Box Jury".

RBA recalls that he and AR were looking at copies of records a few years ago, dubs, and the blanks had come from WPEN. AR says the station had the recording facilities to make such copies. He thinks they may have been records that he made at WPEN with either

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Dan Burley, Fats Waller, or Sammy Price.

RBA thinks they were copies of 78 [rpm] records that had been commercially issued. He is surpris<sup>s</sup>ed at the mention of Fats Waller.

AR explains that it wasn't a commercial session he was speaking of; FW happened to be in the station. AR recalls that that day was also his birthday, and the record opens with FW saying "This is for my boy, Al, happy birthday...." This was in 1937, about ten years before "Journeys Into Jazz" started.

AR's first public activity with jazz was when he ran a jazz concert for the American Newspaper Guild in Philadelphia, at Mercantile Hall, in January of 1936. Sidney Bechet and Sidney DeParis were included. Also in the concert were some members of Jack Teagarden's band that was playing "upstairs for dancing", Sterling Bose and Irving Fazola. [cf. Teagarden books]. A local clarinet player, Billy Kretschmer, was there too. AR says: "As far as I know, this is the first actual concert ever held of authentic jazz, in which people come to buy tickets and sit down<sup>d</sup> to listen."

AR was twenty at the time of this concert. RBA asks if his youthfulness caused any problems, and AR says it did because "I looked a lot younger than I was." He goes on to say that, having left home early, he was already accustomed to compensating for such problems.

[RBA leading]. AR tells about not being recognized as the producer of a concert at Symphony Hall in Boston. He had gone out for coffee or food and when he tried to go back, the guard assumed he was a kid trying to crash the concert. He got in by calling backstage and having Muggsy Spanier identify him.

There were approximately two-hundred "Journey's Into Jazz" concerts. The last one was Carbondale, Illinois in 1967. RBA asks if AR plans to do anymore concerts. AR doesn't plan to because he doesn't think he "Can ever reassemble the quality of music that I consider to be essential for the proper presentation of Jazz."

RBA mentions that he's put on a few things and: "I find it very depressing...even though people may be in the right idiom, I still don't think they understand it, or have the right attitude sometimes."

AR: "I think they're socially conditioned away from it. You see, the circumstances that produced the jazz also produced a different psychological set... Jazz as I knew it when I was a kid in New Orleans was basically an ensemble <sup>ART</sup> set; nobody <sup>EW</sup> knows the names of leaders, nobody knew the names of individual musicians. You only knew the names of bands, and you followed bands. And you got accustomed to a sound - there was no substantial soloing. A solo was an 8-bar break. And the musicians were much better developed harmonically and much better developed tonally. <sup>[sic]</sup> So that there was an actual sound, an abstract sound... without even con-

sidering the music, but just the tonal sound of the jazz was entirely different from anything that I have heard in recent years."

RBA asks whether AR is talking about the sound of the band or the sound of the individual.

AR: "The literal sound of the individuals and the band, the horns. The development of the tone itself. I could best describe it possibly as a far more vocal tone than the tone that you get now which is a relatively mechanical tone. Now, I'm not a musician myself and I don't know whether this is inherent in the horn itself - it may be that as they made better horns that the sound became more mechanical. Or it may be something in the technique of the playing. But a tone - for example, like you'll hear from Wingy Manone is a genuine sound of the New Orleans trumpet as I heard it in the street."

RBA talks about something he's noticed in experiences of concerts. That is, using Johnny Wiggs as an example, if you change just one person in a band "the whole band is changed and the whole attitude."

AR agrees. Picking up the example of JW, AR says that a trumpet player like JW "knows the role of the cornet in the jazz band. He understands the nature of the lead." AR contrasts this with the fact that most musicians think only in terms of their own performance. The typical musician, AR says, "does not know any more how to listen to the sound of a band. And I get the feeling that he doesn't even enjoy the sound of the band particularly."

AR says this is relatively new in New Orleans jazz.

RBA feels that there is a loss of respect for the music and the audience both. AR adds that there's especially a loss of respect for the melodies themselves.

RBA thinks, in general now, the musicians would rather take a break than work hard at the music and enjoy themselves. Jazz has become merely a job to some of them.

AR talks about his producing records. He notes that his own approach is to demand an ensemble sound and to use musicians who can work together and play it that way.

It is a "painful" fact, RBA says, that in the future there will be very few bands that really are bands. AR agrees. RBA goes on to say that there may be a lot of good soloists. AR agrees that there may continue to be a lot of excellent musicians - "but it's like the difference between being a great novelist and a great typist."

RBA asks AR what the first time is that he can remember hearing jazz either live or on records. AR says that it had to be live, "because I can't remember any time when I didn't hear jazz. There was no way that you could grow up in the French Quarter and not hear jazz, just walking around in the street." AR remembers the bands in the streets and people throwing coins. He also remembers standing across the street from the Fern dancehall and listening to the band play for the dime-a-dance operation inside. It was

here that AR met Armand Hug; AR was seven and AH was fifteen. AH was playing then.

AR lived on the corner of St. Louis and Dauphine [Streets]. RBA points out that Sam Morgan might have been in AR's neighborhood. AR doesn't know. "The very first thing I actually remember, as a dramatic incident, was looking out the third-story back window of the house and watching the French Opera <sup>House</sup> burn."

RBA asks if AR remembers musicians who lived in the neighborhood. AR remembers Danny Barker performing in one of the skiffle bands, although he didn't know him at the time. DB played a cigar box there in the street, dancing and singing. DB - AR found out later - lived in the ten-hundred block of Chartres Street.

RBA asks if AR ever heard any bands with carnivals. AR says he doesn't remember any jazz with the carnivals, just the military-type bands. AR is talking about Mardi Gras carnivals. However, in the traveling carnivals that belonged to AR's parents there was a minstrel show. The minstrel show had a pit band that played jazz and Bunk Johnson was the leader. At various times, Albert Nicholas and Baby Dodds played in that pit band. Both were very young, and AR says that it was only in talking to them much later that he discovered that he had met them.

The Carnival, in two visits, was called the Greater Holcamp Shows. They toured through the south and southwest from 1920 to 1923. AR also knew Furry Lewis who traveled with the show.

There were many Holcamp shows, promoted under that name, but they were all private franchises. The show had that name rather than the name of AR's father because it was more expedient. There may have been eight or ten such shows under the name [Holcamp], who was basically a booking agent.

AR's father's name was Josef Lascaux. AR had an uncle named Lucien Delarose Lascaux who was a music-lover. This uncle was the one who brought most of the records into the house. They had all the early jazz records because this uncle knew most of the musicians. AR himself came to know many of the musicians when he was very young. There was one occasion in AR's house when he was five for which Papa Celestin's band was hired.

4:39 RBA brings up Buddy Bolden. AR tells a story about going to The State Mental Hospital in Jackson, Louisiana with his uncle when AR was twelve. As AR recalls, his uncle was making an exploratory trip to see whether Bolden would be able to play again or record - AR isn't sure of the exact purpose of the trip. AR thinks BB was "pretty far gone by that time."

RBA asks if AR's uncle was "hiring bands." AR doesn't know. He recalls "some project afoot where he was considering doing some kind of recording." But, as a kid, AR never knew the details of such things.

AR tells what he remembers of the meeting with Buddy Bolden: "My uncle brought along a cornet or a trumpet. And his object

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was to put the horn into Bolden's hands and see whether he could do anything with it. And I remember Bolden taking the horn and examining it as though he had never seen one before, and handing it back with no interest or apparent recognition."

RBA brings up the subject of cotton candy. AR's father holds the basic patents on the machinery that makes cotton candy. He was originally in the sugar and cotton brokerage business and "fooling around" with attempts to improve the refining of sugar. In the course of this experimentation, AR's father developed what is called cotton candy. He <sup>o</sup>g~~at~~ into the carnival business as a way of getting cotton candy to the public under the most favorable circumstances. It was very successful, and AR's father gradually acquired more interest in the carnival itself until he wound up "franchising the whole show." AR adds that his father is still alive, and that he lives in New York.

5:16 AR's father left New Orleans shortly after AR did when AR was fourteen.

RBA asks about Jelly Roll Morton. AR first met JRM in winter-time, most probably 1937. They were introduced by Reese <sup>Dupre</sup> [Dupry sp?] and "who claimed to have been ~~the~~ may well have been the composer of "Shortening Bread" and "Dupree Blues". [See composer credits on discs.] AR and JRM met in the Douglas Hotel on Broad and Lombard Streets in Philadelphia. AR says he had seen JRM that day or the

day before at the Lincoln Theater. AR had found the band "singularly unimpressive." They nodded to one another, still strangers, backstage. Later, at the Hotel, AR was having a drink and talking about a promotion Reese D'pree [sp?] wanted to start. JRM came in then and they were introduced.

They met again in 1938 at the Jungle Inn in Washington, when AR was there as a delegate in the Keep America Out of War convention. (AR was on a panel with Smedley Butler and John Dewey.) Knowing that JRM had the Jungle Inn, AR went to see him. It was about 10p.m. and the place was empty except for JRM. They each had a few drinks and talked, and JRM played. AR says he stayed there until three in the morning and nobody else came in. He went back the next two nights, and then began to go there regularly - AR would make trips from Philadelphia, bringing people with him, to hear JRM talk and play the piano. This went on for about six months.

RBA wants to know exactly what JRM was doing at the Lincoln Theater when AR first met him. JRM played with the band, about a twelve-piece orchestra, and AR repeats that they were not very impressive. AR can't recall whether JRM was "especially audible". Moreover, AR admits that he didn't have much interest in JRM then, didn't really know what he was doing in fact. AR explains by then, what JRM was playing was "substantially removed from what I thought of as authentic jazz." AR feels that this was the fault of the context in which he heard him. "The band was clearly not represent-

ative of what I would think of as a Jelly Roll Morton sound."

RBA asks what the difference was at the Jungle Inn. AR says he was playing piano solo there. One felt that his singing was not an attempt "to perform but merely to state the lyrics."

6:06 AR says his original reaction to the music was: "It was quaint. I was really not moved yet... I wasn't up to an appreciation of Jelly Roll as of course I am now. But I thought of him as being an old-hat musician who was important historically... But at that time I felt that the business of jazz had moved far beyond Jelly Roll. It's only now that I realize that it never caught up with him."

RBA asks AR about the first recording session that he worked on "in any capacity at all." AR says it was a recording of the Andrew's sisters "Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen." [sp?] "But that happens to be irrelevant to my general recording career." The first recording session AR did "under my own aegis" was a record of Dan Burley called "Chicken Shack Shuffle." It was a 78 rpm with Pops Foster, Danny Barker, and Jimmy Archey.

RBA wants to know what AR was doing with the Andrew Sisters, "or should I ask?" AR explains that he was asked to go and help out in the recording booth because someone had failed to show up for work. However, AR met Bobby Hackett at that time, and was impressed with him. This was about 1935.

[cf. discographies]

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6:30

RBA asks about DAN Burley. AR says he was a very close friend. DB was the editor of the Amsterdam News, which was "kind of the official organ of Harlem." He was a fine newspaperman and a "very interesting rent-party style piano player," AR and DB bummed around together in Harlem.

RBA asks if they had a business association. They did a few little dances and concerts.

The session with DB was very successful, AR says, and it sold well. AR found the record business more demanding than he had expected, and so he sold the masters to Exclusive, who ~~reissued~~<sup>reissued</sup> them on their label.

6:47

RBA asks what the original label was. It was Arkay. "It was just too cumbersome. We made four sides, that was about all. I mean, I really couldn't handle the distribution factors and -- I found that I really didn't want to be bothered with it..."

AR was "actually the owner. We set up a corporate structure with my then-business-partner, whose name was Kessler<sup>[SR?]</sup>. We just used the initials "R and K". But he was not really involved in it at all. I just had him on as a member of the corporation 'cause I needed to incorporate."

RBA asks if AR had to call on disc jockeys and suggests the term "payola". AR acknowledges that he "did all that. And I found that I didn't care very much for it. So, I discovered how seamy that side of the record business was and I just got out."

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RBA asks what AR thought of DB's music. AR thought it was interesting. "It was a very earthy sound and ~~y~~<sup>E</sup>xtrémely indiginous<sup>ESP?</sup> to -at that time- to the Harlem scene. And, of course, I was always overwhelmed by Pops Foster's bass playing, and I thought that the rhythm was excellent." AR says he wouldn't make a record like that today. DB was given a free hand and he was partial to his saxophone player, John Hardee. AR supposes that JH was very good, but he realized that, "I wasn't really going to be able to make anything successfully that wasn't actually following out my own musical views."

The tape is about to run out. AR and RBA agree to do another tape sometime. AR: "You'll probably found out a lot of things about the music business that nobody ever got near."

[End of Reel]

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Reel II  
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Also present: Richard B. Allen

Digest: Ralph Adamo

Checked by: Richard B. Allen

[There was a lapse of several hours between reels I and II]  
RBA begins by wishing AR a happy birthday.

[On reel I (Al Rose, February 3, 1975)] RBA and AR were telling about AR's first concert as a producer. Among those who were there was Sidney Bechet.

RBA asks how well AR knew him. AR says he knew him "very well indeed". SB and AR, along with Muggsy Spanier, Pops Foster, Baby Dodds, "and various trombone players", made a tour of the Ivy League together. Among the trombone players who were with them from time to time were: Georg Brunis, Brad , and later Jimmy Archey.

RBA asks about stories about SB. AR says that "a lot of people who knew Bechet were aware of a period in his life when he'd got more interested in photography than in music". AR thinks he was more interested in cameras than in taking pictures. SB would show up at jobs "with cameras hanging all over him like a Christmas tree and spent a lot of time shooting pictures of other musicians which never came out". AR says he was a mild and quiet individual. Sometimes he would get impatient with people, but he masked it well.

RBA asks, " Didn't he have women that were bothering him?"  
AR says, "Yeah--you don't want me to tell you about Tallulah [Bankhead]"?  
RBA: "Well, that's up to you." AR says he's written it in the [as yet unpublished] book [ I Remember Jazz ] already.

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AR says that TB was "crazy about" SB and chased him from city to city. SB "didn't care that much. He was interested in Tallulah... cause Tallulah gave him money and gifts of various kinds". AR says that TB didn't seem to miss an opportunity to find out where SB was playing. AR was involved because "if they were to go anyplace together, why, somebody had to be along to make it look respectable...."

RBA suggests that AR was a chaperone and AR accepts the term. AR says SB was a "notorious tightwad", but SB did once give him a tie clasp. (AR eventually gave the clasp to Walt Gowans who plays clarinet for "The Mother's Boys" in Detroit.)

Ar says SB was a very reliable about showing up for jobs. Also, "he never seemed to be paying much attention to the musicians on what they were doing, and was extremely uncritical of other musicians".

RBA asks how it came about that SB gave AR a tie clasp. AR and SB were going someplace together, and SB was wearing a tie bar but AR wasn't. In those days, AR says, it was fashionable to wear one. SB told AR he "looked like a slob" and put one on him.

RBA notes that AR wears a pin in his lapel. AR says it's his Mensa pin. He says he only wears it to remember what suit he had on last. RBA asks what Mensa is. AR explains that it is an organization of people whose IQs are in the first two percent of the population

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"...it does not fulfill any of the aims that I hoped it would...so I haven't been active in it virtually since the time I joined."

There are chapters all over the U.S., including in New Orleans.

RBA expresses some mild surprise that there is a chapter in New Orleans.

The subject of recording sessions is taken up again. In addition to Dan Burly and [John] Hardee, Danny Barker was in on the first session AR produced. So was "a young guitar player by the name of Herman Mitchell" whom AR hasn't heard from since. RBA doesn't know of HM.

The session was in Steinway Hall in New York. The engineer was "a well-known songwriter by the name of Harry B. Smith, who at that time owned Steinway Hall".

2:25 RBA asks if AR did any recording sessions in New Orleans. AR did a lot of sessions in New Orleans in cooperation with Joe Mares. "Some of them were mine, some of them were his." AR recalls that RBA was present at some of them- for instance, at Woodmen of the World Hall when AR made "King Zulu Parade" with Johnny Wiggs , Raymond Burke, Emile Christian, Jeff Reddick, Paul Barbarin, and Sherwood Mangipae. RBA says he went to the Hall for dances and may have been at the session, but he isn't sure. AR also produced dances at the Hall, "largely in order to set up an opportunity for Johnny Wiggs and people like that to work regularly, so that people could have a place

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to go to hear 'em". RBA and AR agree that those records are still played on the radio, especially now during the Mardi Gras season. RBA says it saddens him to hear them "because so many people are not on the scene any more". AR adds that the music [on the records] is still good and RBA agrees, "but what are you going to do to get that kind of sound now".

2:48

AR recalls that RBA was there when AR did the Lakefront Loungers sessions at WTPS. They made "Ponchartrain the Beautiful" and "Old Spanish Fortissimo" at that time. AR also mentions the records that he makes for Louisiana's Department of Commerce and Industry. He's made three LPs already, the third of which will be out in a couple of weeks, AR says. He's planning to do a series of four more LPs to be put away and released "as required, but as kind of insurance based on the fact that there are not as many musicians around anymore and that we can't depend on their survival long enough to wait for years in order to record them". RBA suggests: "On their replacements?" AR replies that there aren't any replacements, and that "we're especially weak in piano and drums, and clarinet". As for trombone and cornet players, AR says that there are still some. [Note that bass is not mentioned. RBA, February 21, 1975] But there aren't any clarinet players who can play the harmonic role of the clarinet in a jazz band.

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Last time, Eddie Miller came out of a thirty-year retirement of this instrument and played clarinet, but AR says he doesn't know what they're going to do next time. AR names Cie [Frazier] and Louis Barbarin as two drummers he can use, and Armund Hug and Jeanette Kimball "who can play the piano for these purposes". AR goes on to name Jeff Riddick and, if he is in shape, Stanley Mendelson as other possibilities. In fact, AR would like to use these four piano players, each on one of the four sessions.

RBA brings up Steve Pistorius who plays routine piano. AR heard him in Sedalia at the Scott Joplin Festival. "He's a phenomenal piano player, I think he won fourth prize." RBA and RA aren't sure if he plays jazz piano at all.

RBA asks AR if he was involved with recording the Brunies brothers. AR was not. RBA says he was listening to their record [on AM 12"LP] yesterday and thought that Jules Galle was better than most of the clarinet players around. AR agrees.

AR asks if RBA didn't go to Biloxi with him and [Johnny] Wiggs and Raymond Burke to hear the Brunies Band. RBA thinks he did. [I now think I didn't. RBA, February 21, 1975] AR says he enjoyed the night and was impressed with the music.

RBA RBA talks about the way one re-evaluates things when one goes

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back to listen to them. He mentions Bill Russell's listening to [record] masters that he rejected years ago and the fact they sound great to BR now. AR points out that your criteria change over the years, and "of course we just don't have any more [musicians] like we used to have to work with!"

RBA asks which sessions AR did with Joe Mares. AR did a session with Joe Avery and Paul Barbarin; a session with Sweet Emma [Barrett] and Percy Humphrey; and one with Raymond Burke and Harry Shields, "the two clarinets", called "Doc and His Patients". Jeannette Kimball, p; Clink Martin, tu; Sherwood Mangiapane, b, were also on the latter session.

RBA asks what AR thinks of the soprano sax as an instrument.

3:57 AR says, "Well, I don't think there's much excuse for it actually. It is not bad as a solo instrument, although it is not as true as I like to hear an instrument. But, of course, there is no place for it in any kind of ensemble. And you know, the fact of the matter is that my own feelings about jazz- I really can't ever really get excited about solos. And to me, a solo or a vocal chorus is more or less an intermission. And it's not that I have anything against them; it's just that that's not the point where I'm listening- I'm always listening for that band sound, and I'd be very happy if you never heard a solo".

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4:07 RBA asks if there wasn't soprano sax on "Doc and His Patients".  
There was, AR says, though in some cases they were playing two  
clarinets. Other than that, AR says he never recorded with saxo-  
phone on any session he was personally in control of. He also only used  
4:13 saxophone for special purposes in any concerts he produced. For  
example, Bud Freeman worked a couple of sessions, "but that had a  
lot to do with the politics of the band..." RBA asks if [Sidney]  
Bechet played soprano for AR. AR says he always gave SB two or  
three solos to do in a concert on soprano sax; "there were strictly  
solos with rhythm accompaniments, but at all other times he played  
the clarinet."

RBA asks if he was ever hard to control. AR says he was never  
a problem, he was very agreeable. RBA asks if AR would call him intellige  
in his approach. AR says he would call SB "simple and straight-  
forward. He always said what he meant and you could always get a  
direct response from Sidney; you knew what he was going to do and  
what he wasn't going to do, and if he didn't like anything, he'd  
tell you. And there were rarely any kind of situations where I ever  
saw Sidney having hard feelings about anything with anybody." SB  
understood what the music was about and understood the role of his  
instrument and that of the other instruments. "And he was frequent-  
ly frustrated by the fact that the other musicians frequently didn't

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understand." AR recalls one time when he was having lunch with SB, and Joe Thomas, "an excellent trumpet player", sat down with them. AR was considering asking JT to do a concert for him in Philadelphia. AR asked SB, after JT had left, whether SB thought it was a good idea. SB said JT played alright, but that he didn't know any of the stuff they knew and wouldn't be able to play with SB's band. So AR never used him. The same thing happened with Frankie Newton. AR says that he frequently consulted with SB to find out his opinion of projected concerts, since SB had played with so many of the musicians and "knew what they knew".

RBA says he finds it difficult to think of many trumpet players in New York who really suited SB's clarinet playing. AR says that Max Kaminsky worked well with SB. At that time, most of the people who wanted to hear SB were interested in hearing him play "Summertime" on the "fish horn". AR thinks these audiences weren't very discriminating about bands anyway; "it seems like I was the only one who worried about the sound of the band." AR would, when he hired SB, usually also hire a clarinet player who played mainly to ensemble parts. It wasn't uncommon, AR says, for him to have SB and Albert Nicholas together on jobs.

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5:01 RBA asks if AR worked for Joe Mares. AR explains that JM was interested in getting the music of New Orleans recorded; "he has a feeling of commitment about it". He was concerned that a lot of New Orleans musicians had not been recorded properly or at all. AR says he felt the same concern and thought of himself as helping out, "in many cases proposing and producing sessions myself, that I thought were suitable". AR says that he learned a great deal from JM "about the nature of the white jazz musicians' approach, so-called". AR says it was a long time before he developed any recognition of the competence of most of the white musicians. "I probably shared a lot of the prejudices of some of our European friends...." It was JM and Johnny Wiggs who helped AR see the merits of what the white jazz musicians had been doing. AR says that even though he'd used white players in concerts, he had felt he was using them by default,

5:23 "even though I had some great ones". AR adds, "Of course, I was kind of overwhelmed by the way Muggsy [Spanier] played lead, and he fit so well into ensemble playing, played such a great lead that-- again, however, I felt like he was just one who had come the closest to the black style.... Of course, now I understand that there is no black style and that there's just New Orleans jazz style and some people can play it and some can't".

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RBA asks how AR would fit Bix [Beiderbecke] into that. AR says that BB wasn't relevant to this question, that his musical direction- had he lived- would have gravitated to the modern sound. AR hears a lot of BB in Miles Davis. He sees clearly a relationship that goes from BB to the moderns, "the cool performers".

36 AR: "For my own purposes I trace certain lines. For example, I consider that among the old New Orleans trumpet players there was already a division in the very beginning, that there were some musicians that were fundamentally good, good jazz people like [Joe "King"] Oliver and Bunk [Johnson], and that there were others who were kind of Lokum musicians, and I would consider that that would be represented by Freddie Keppard, for example. And I think that most of the genuine, authentic tendencies in the Orleans jazz came down through Oliver and Louis [Armstrong] and that most of the deviations came through Keppard and, again, through Louis- because there's some of that in Louis too, you know. But branched off into [Roy] Eldridge and [Dizzy] Gillespie and... Fats Navarro and all those people. Whereas, I see a line- it's even a separate line- that goes from Bix through [Red] Nichols and that period of [Jimmy] McPartland's...and comes down into people like Chet Baker

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and eventually into the Miles Davis's. In other words, I see three distinct lines of development."

RBA asks how AR fit [Johnny] Wiggs into that. AR thinks that JW is the best jazz cornetist that he ever heard. "That is, he plays better lead, he plays proper lead - makes it easier to put a band together ... was the ideal jazz band trumpet player." Also, the quality of the music Wigg's band played during the revival is as good as or better than the things that are revered as the important collector's items of the past. AR goes on: "From the standpoint of musical quality, the sessions that Wiggs and Harry Shields and Tom Brown made together are certainly among the very greatest of jazz recording. I play that stuff at home more than anything else."

RBA says he has to sort out all the "different Wiggs" and AR's opinion of the different Wiggs. AR says he always likes Wiggs better when JW gets the Davenport out of the horn [i.e., when he doesn't play like Bix Beiderbecke]. In the "right kind of a musical instrument" he does that. AR says that when he's happy he plays like [Joe] Oliver, and like BB when he's mad. AR claims that he is interested in BB, but "more interested than excited".

6:17 AR continues about JW: "Having gone through the original

period of jazz and then gone through the lull, it was possible for somebody like Wiggs to then reassess the whole thing, come to an intellectual understanding of what was happening and -- in the process then putting together music - have a much clearer theoretical understanding of what was taking place than a Joe Oliver would have. And given all that hindsight then -- when you put a band together, when you strip away the sentiment of, you know, the old-time stuff -- but base it entirely on the understanding of the music and the ability of the musicians to play their parts, I think that Wiggs put together the best jazz records that I know."

6:25 RBA asks how AR rates Raymond Burke. AR: "Well, Raymond is a great creative genius. He is probably one of the most original-- certainly the most original creative artist in New Orleans at this time. However, he does not fulfill the classical role of the clarinet in the jazz band. And while he is a fabulous hand to have on a session, I always feel like you still need a clarinet player if you have Raymond. Somebody still needs to play the clarinet part. I think that I get more kicks from listening to Raymond maybe than any other musician that's now playing. But that's different from structuring a jazz organization." RBA suggests that AR could listen to RB as a soloist; AR agrees and adds that he would prefer to.

AR says he's recorded RB a lot. He mentions "that awful session with Jim [Kweslein], the jug band musician." RBA hasn't

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heard it. AR says he hasn't missed anything, because "this man is not of the talent caliber to go with the kind of a band that we put together for him." AR says it was supposed to be released by Warner Brothers, but doubts that the records were good enough. AR mentions one cut, "Jambalaya", on which only the band played; it was good. AR adds that Raymond was fabulous on the session. RBA comments that one guy can ruin a session; AR says yes, "especially when he's the lead singer." Jim [Kweslein] also played guitar and wasn't bad, but in a duet with Emmanuel Sayles "the contrast is marked and he's just not up to that caliber."

6:47 RBA asks about Knocky Parker. AR: "Well, Knocky Parker is a real musical phenomenon. He is a piano player that gives you an enormous feeling of security when he's working on a session for you. In the first place, his knowledge of material is vast, and his taste is good. He always knows the chords; he always knows the appropriate chords; he's always got a lot of original chords to play, which are original without being outlandish. And he never throws the musicians off, he keeps a good beat, and he's really a superb jazz band player. I'm delighted with him. I'm also delighted with his interpretive capacity on the ragtime pieces that he does, even though he has his weaknesses because he doesn't practice as much as he ought to. But I really feel that he gets the kind of emotional quality into the rags that they were meant to have, and although I can't demonstrate that, I find it has a very satisfying quality,

his playing has a satisfying quality." AR knows KP doesn't practice as much as he should because AR has been with KP when he hasn't played for several days and then gone right on a concert -- "without even warming up, and sit right down at the piano and start to play."

7:01 RBA mentions that AR and KP have spent long hours together. AR brings up the fact that KP was writing his dissertation at AR's place in Key Largo [Florida] for two months, "and Knocky virtually never touched the piano in that time, although he had time to do it in."

RBA notes that some people are compelled to play. AR says KP isn't one of them. Bob Greene is compelled, AR says, and "he has to get his practice in every day or he gets nervous." AR speculates that Bob Greene has to practice so much probably because otherwise he wouldn't be able to reproduce, literally, the sound of Jelly Roll Morton. BG works with a variable speed tape recorder with which he regulates the speed to provide the right pitch. Then he plays the JRM records, then the piano. And he isn't through until you can only hear one piano. AR explains that BG also has that kind of compulsive personality, where he thinks everything will fall apart if he isn't at a piano every day.

RBA sums up the list of people AR has said was at one particular session[s]; The Lakefront Loungers with Sherwood [Mangiapane], Doc [Dr. Edmond Souchon], Paul Barbarin, Knocky, Paul Crawford. He asks AR what he thinks of that session. AR: "I think that's

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a fine session. That's one of the big kicks that I have to recall, is the making of that session. And it was a pretty free-wheeling session. And I felt that we did a lot of very original material there, and we had an original approach to things. And I think everybody liked it."

RBA says he wondered how it all fit together in AR's mind with that particular group of people, whether AR thought it sounded like an ensemble. AR says it sounded enough like an ensemble at the right time to satisfy him. "It had a free sound and I was very, very satisfied with that." RBA says he enjoys RB's solo on [Tishomingo Blues]. AR: Oh yeah." RBA: "That was a terrific solo. --"

[End of Reel]

