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Guide to the Stafford James Collection 2001-2005



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.STAFFJAMES
Title	James, Stafford. Collection
Date	2001-2005
Size	1.5 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Stafford James, bassist and composer. James' career started in the 1970s and he plays classical and jazz music. He is unique because he plays the melodies, thereby making the bass the lead instrument. The Stafford James papers contain compact discs, press kits, and scores.

Acknowledgments

The Stafford James Papers were processed and preserved as part of the "Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project," funded with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Information on Use

Access

The collection does not include access copies for part or all of the audio material. Researchers will need to consult with staff before requesting material from this collection.

The remainder of the collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: James, Stafford. Collection, [Box#, Folder#], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Stafford James was born in Evanston, Illinois, in 1946. He entered the Air Force in 1965. When he was stationed in Biloxi, he bought a bass but was refused lessons because it was inappropriate for a white man to give a black man lessons. Instead, he practiced on his own for three hours every day. In 1966, he started playing at Hollies Lounge in New Orleans on the weekends, and was influenced by the club's other musicians, including Nat Perillat, James Black, Roger Dickerson, Chuck Beatty, Germaine Basel, Richard Payne and Trevor Khoeler. He also formed his own quartet with three other musicians from his base.

After serving in the Air Force, he studied bass at the Chicago Conservatory College with Rudolf Fasbender. In 1969, he moved to Hoboken, New Jersey, to attend Mannes College of Music in New York, where he studied with Julius Levine. He worked delivering mail during the day, and by chance met Pharoah Sanders, who invited him to play his first jazz concert in New York. Until this time, he primarily studied classical music, but after playing with Sanders considered how he would earn a living as a musician. By the early 1970s, James played often with Sanders, Alice Coltrane, and performed and recorded with Albert Ayler. James continued to play around the world with the Stafford James Ensemble and other musicians. In 1989 James moved to Paris and formed his ensemble The Stafford James Project.

James' playing is unique because he plays the melodies, making the bass the lead instrument. He has played with Kenny Barron, Betty Carter, Al Cohn, Alice Coltrane, Dameronia, Sonny Fortune, Dexter Gordon, Slide Hampton, Jimmy Heath, Bobby Hutcherson, J.J. Johnson, Milt Jackson, Melba Moore, Woody Shaw, Joe Williams, Nancy Wilson, Mingus Dynasty, Freddy Hubbard, Jacky Maclean, Art Blakey, Pharoah Sanders, and the McCoy Tyner Trio.

James played on recordings with Albert Ayler, Gary Bartz, Dexter Gordon, Robin Kenyatta, Andrew Hill, Oliver Lake, John Scofield, Woody Shaw, Bill Hardman, Cecil Payne, Jimmy Heath, Ronnie Mathews, Barney Wilen, Pharoah Sanders, and Lavelle. His compositions were recorded by Gary Bartz, Harvey Mason, Lee Ritenour, Woody Shaw, P.J. Perry, Louis Hayes, and Joan Cartwright.

Besides performing, James also taught at the United Nations International School in New York City, Umbria Summer Music Clinics in Perugia, Italy, The New School in New York City, and the Music Conservatory of Sydney, Australia. He has played all across the world, such as Italy, Martinique, Norway, France, Holland, Yugoslavia, Syria, Egypt, Japan, Uzbekistan, New Zealand, Germany, Monaco, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United States. James won a National Endowment for the Arts grant (1976), World Tour United States Information Services grant (1984), and a New York State Council for the Arts grant (1985). He was also a recipient of the 1998 Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship in Umbertide, Italy and New York City.

Stafford James lives with his wife, Claudine, in Paris, France.

Scope Note

The Stafford James Collection contains a 2002 press kit of James' resume and newspaper articles about James and his music career; a 2005 press kit with his resume and copies of his scores for, "Sonatina for Viola D'Amore and Doublebass," "Symphonic Tone Poem 2," and "Mythos"; and a bound volume of scores containing "Rossini Sketches," "Tableau Madrilène," and "Soleriana." There are also compact discs of The Stafford James Project. The compact disc with the Compositions from 1973-2007 includes a printout of the list of all .pdf documents.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Chicago Jazz Archive

Subject Headings

- James, Stafford
- Composers
- Jazz
- Jazz musicians
- University of Chicago. Chicago Jazz Archive

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Compact Disc, Compositions, 1973-2007

Box 1

Folder 2

Compact Disc, "Le Gecko," 2001

Box 1

Folder 3

Compact Disc, "Live and Studio," undated

Box 1

Folder 4

Compact Disc, "Live Aus Dem Schlot," 2004

Box 1

Folder 5

Press Kit, 2002

Box 1

Folder 6

Press Kit, 2005

Box 1

Folder 7

Scores, 2003