

Jazz in Black & White
American Jazz Museum
Bob Barry



No matter where I was, or what I was doing throughout most of my multiple careers in the arts, my camera was never far from my side. Sometime after moving to Los Angeles in the early 1980's, opportunity knocked on my door, in the form of an invitation by Jazz guitar legend John Pisano, to photograph his "Guitar Night". This unique event takes place once a week, where John invites a world-class guitarist to play with him, usually assisted by bass, and drums.

At this writing I have photographed over 150 guitarists, and nearly 500 Guitar Nights. I opened my vistas, and began shooting many other venues, and events, along with the bass players, drummers, keyboards, horns, reeds, & the singers. My new world grew even larger with new outlets given to me by the record CO's, who hired me to do photo art.

Some of the artists I have done CD photo art for are, Kenny Burrell, Rosemary, Clooney, Mundell Lowe, Dianne Schuur, Joe Diorio, Johnny Rivers, John Pisano and about sixty more. I began to supply images to magazines, shooting concerts, and became involved with the Jazz Photographers Association, where I met the man who was to become my friend, and mentor in Jazz Photography, Ray Avery.

Ray Avery referred to my work as "Performance Portraits". It is that description that most satisfies me. All my images were taken during performances in ambient light. Under these conditions, I find the honesty, vulnerability, and emotional content I look for. It is my great hope that all who view my work will be able to get a look into the souls of these brave, dedicated, talented musicians, and hopefully, get to know them as I have.

I am presently on the Board of Directors of the "Milt Hinton Award Committee for Excellence in Jazz Photography," I published the "John Pisano Guitar Night Calendar," and I am presently working on a photo essay book called "The Brotherhood."

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William Ellis



'Brilliant musicians, instruments and stages, all with their story to tell – that's where I'm at. Wherever the gig, from the smallest club to the grandest hall, I always have the same feeling of exhilaration as the playing begins and a unique performance unfolds. This is my vision of Jazz - the energy, expression and atmosphere of what's happening on, and off stage. The quiet moments too, they can swing! All the way from Dizzy and Miles to here and now in Africa, The Americas, Australasia and Europe I've found that music and a smile is the language of the World. Jazz is the Poetry. Love it.'

William Ellis, 2007

William Ellis was born in Liverpool in 1957. Based in England he is a self-taught photographer who began his professional career in 1979 and has specialised in jazz for around twenty years. His images have attracted the attention of jazz lovers worldwide and his works are held in many private collections – including collections obtained by musicians with whom he has worked.

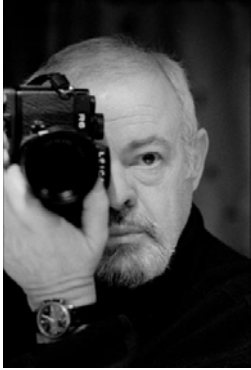
Ellis travels extensively documenting the contemporary World jazz scene and exhibiting his work at international jazz events and commercial galleries. He is widely recognised as having created an important body of work in this challenging genre - this was acknowledged by the American Jazz Museum when he was invited to present the inaugural international exhibition in 2005.

In January 2007 he joined the board of the highly prestigious Milt Hinton Award for Excellence in Jazz Photography as European Representative and in the same month his work was acclaimed in Christies International Magazine when reviewing the Modern Works on Paper exhibition at The Royal Academy of Arts in London.

Ellis' close ties with many of the festivals at which he has photographed have helped to ensure that a valuable visual record of this jazz age is created. In 2004 he was Guest Visual Artist at the famous North Sea Jazz Festival in The Hague with an exhibition of forty images in The Rembrandtzaal.

In 2007/8 he was appointed Guest Visual Artist at Glasgow International Jazz Festival - a city he first visited in 1990 to photograph two giants of jazz - Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie. Over the years he has photographed many leading artists performing there including B.B. King, Horace Silver, John McLaughlin, Max Roach, Pat Metheny and Tony Bennett.

Ellis is returning to Cape Town in 2009 to present a solo exhibition, following a joint presentation in 2003 with another acclaimed photographer, Johannesburg based Jürgen Schadeberg. Later this year William Ellis revisits Amsterdam to present an exhibition at the American Hotel near to The Rijksmuseum. The work continues, whether shooting front of house or backstage, at the World's legendary clubs and festivals, as he continues to create memorable images in his own highly distinctive style.



BIO - JAZZ PHOTOGRAPHER, JOS KNAEPEN
by Suzi Price, Editor, JazzReview.com

Belgian born, Jos Knaepen, commonly referred to as "The Jazzman," became interested in jazz at age 17, after purchasing his first LPs of Django Reinhardt and Sidney Bechet in 1961. At age 18, he regularly attended the infamous Comblain La Tour where jazz giants performed during their European tours. It was during this period his interest in photography began; his professional career started in the early '70s.

Knaepen's photographic work continued during the early 1980s. His award-winning action photos were exhibited regularly throughout Belgium. By 1985, his professional career took a hiatus until 1990 when he began again, this time focusing strictly on jazz; the great love of his life.

Jos is routinely commissioned to exhibit his photography at cultural events, such as the Flemish Center for Jazz and the Blue Note Jazz Festival. This year, he will exhibit his repertoire at the Antwerp Photo Museum. He is also the official photographer for the Blue Note and Middleheim Jazz Festivals.

Gaining quite a reputation in the U.S., his photography is commonplace in *Down Beat* and *Jazz Times* magazines. Impressed with his art, the IAJE director of education invited Jos to cover their 2007 New York events...and the Smithsonian Institute used his photography to illustrate their special anniversary feature on Wynton Marsalis. His photos have also donned posters for Carnegie Hall.

Traveling the globe, Jos Knaepen can be seen capturing a moment in time, for where there is jazz, there he will be. With an eye for perfection, his photography is a thing of beauty. How does he do it? "To me, the most important thing is to hold that special moment when everything on stage is in balance--when the musician is in total harmony with himself and his fellow musicians. One can feel it, see it--the goose-bump moment!"