

When my dad asked me to write the liner notes for his first CD, I was a bit reluctant. After all, this is a task for someone who knows jazz deeply, who can attest to the quality of the music on this recording. While I have a passing knowledge of jazz - and though I certainly enjoy the music - I am not an expert by any means. Everything I know comes secondhand from my parents' choice of radio stations. Then I reconsidered.

In my 24 years, I have heard a lot of Neil's guitar playing. Every gathering of friends, he would find the host's guitar and melodically accompany the discussion with a few jazz lines. He played so much most of us took him for granted. We never really told him how good he was because it seemed a given. He already knew, didn't he? He played terrifically; we would listen, or talk, or in my case, stare dumbly, as if I could somehow comprehend it all just by watching.

Maybe the reason we never told my dad how great he sounded was because we never understood where the music could take him. He seemed to transport himself to a place I've never been, giving himself a high with every song he played. While I was looking for concrete results - he wasn't performing live, playing with bands, recording his music for other people - he just played and practiced for himself. I didn't know that was all he needed at the time. While I wanted to see him play live shows, he was still learning how to play. Now he's satisfying my urges by recording his music, and simultaneously I'm

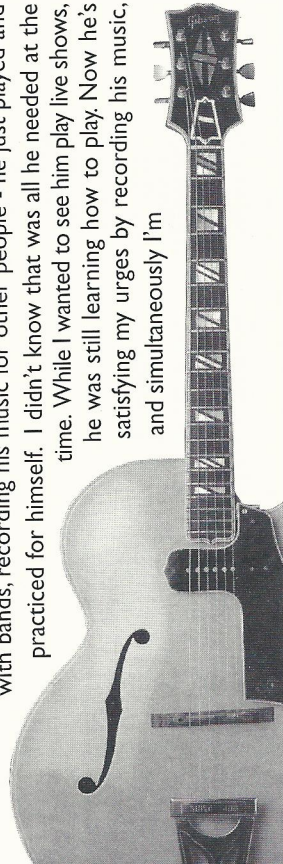
beginning to understand the importance of all those years of practice. For the songs on here are no easy bunch, and he and Jim do a terrific job interpreting them. From Solo Flight (written by Charlie Christian) to Charlie Parker's Donna Lee, Jim's nimble rhythm and Neil's flowing solos combine to make a great record.

It's fortunate for both musicians that they found each other: Jim's tireless examination of technique and constant quest for improvement have inspired them both to new heights. And while Jim has become adept at keeping a bassline moving during his changes, Neil has honed his solo lines impressively. They fit together well.

Jim, thank you for being such a tireless student of music and combining your enthusiasm with Neil's to create a great memory for both of you - your first CD.

Rivers Janssen
10/19/95

Produced by David Lichens, Engineered by Steve Sundholm, Remastered by Bill Barnett at Gung-Ho Studio, Eugene, Oregon. Package Design by Inovar, Eugene, Oregon.
Recorded June 15, 1995 in Portland, Oregon.



Jim Hall . . .

About Barry and the Book



"Barry Galbraith, aside from having been a dear friend, was one of my most important teachers. Some of what Barry taught me was indirect—a result of my having played written music he had already performed or recorded. Once, while rehearsing some impossibly difficult music of George Russell's which Barry had recorded, I just gave up and told the conductor, 'I can't play this #Δ%?! stuff! You'll have to call Barry.' (Unfortunately, Barry was busy).

Most other things I learned were at once more subtle and more important: how to thin out written chord voicings allowing the guitar to open up and sing and how to get more feeling and forward motion from a written single line—helping the line move forward to its arrival point. This had been done by penciling out unnecessary notes and by merely 'suggesting' certain others. Barry had done all of this and I was learning from it.

I also learned by working with Barry—sometimes in a two-guitar setting and from talking with him.

So now the learning continues . . .

Here we have this stunning collection of famously popular/standard tunes, beautifully notated in classical tradition with tablature included, just in case. This is accompanied by a CD recording of each piece—crystal clear performances by John Purse. The book has 13 of Barry Galbraith's arrangements including: *For All We Know*; *My Funny Valentine*; *In a Sentimental Mood*; and *'Round Midnight*. These are the meat-and-potatoes of a jazz musician's repertoire.

There is no excuse for not learning from all of this. Even now as I'm writing, I'm thinking about how differently and beautifully Barry harmonizes the 'A' phrase of *In a Sentimental Mood* each time it comes around. I've played the tune hundreds of times and never came up with anything like this.

'Round Midnight is something else again! It's a virtuoso piece technically and harmonically, by being written in the guitar-friendly key of E minor rather than the usual E-flat minor.

The book starts simply and clearly and moves toward fascinating complexity and maturity . . . a musical life experience trip. *If you don't take it, I will!*"

Jim Hall
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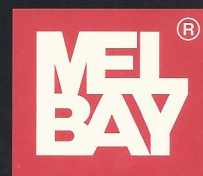
BARRY GALBRAITH

GUITAR SOLOS



THIRTEEN STANDARDS

compiled by Jim Lichens



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