

Mr. Bill Watrous

June 13, 2001

Via telephone

BW = Bill Watrous

JG: Thanks for your help. I really appreciate it! How did you learn how to improvise?

BW: I sort of learned by ear. I had a kind of curious nature when I was a young guy, when I first started to play. One of the things that I did, because we were not well-to-do people, my folks and I, and I didn't have any study materials. So, what I did was play along with whatever I heard on the radio. Making up a part, fitting in and trying to have fun with it; sort of making a little performance of it for myself. And, since I didn't have any music, everything was improvised. So, in essence, I learned to play by ear, to be very honest, from the very earliest time, which left my sightreading in a great deal of disarray.

Well, you've obviously caught up more than enough since then.

BW: Well, yeah, but now I don't do any studio work any more, so it's in disarray again. I can get by if it isn't too difficult, but I don't like to read any more. I don't enjoy it.

Kind of related to that, when you play are you thinking about the harmony? For example, "This is a D minor chord?"

BW: I never go there. I've reached the point where I don't actually think in those terms; I hear the change. So, consequently, I'm not locked into that. I have very little reference that I actually ... for instance I don't sit around and think, "Okay, D minor, C7, F minor9 " or whatever it is. I don't actually go there. But you have to in the beginning. Part of the thing is, all of the tunes – and I probably know about 3,000 tunes – I just know them. I know what they sound like. I know how they're structured. I know how they're laid out. And, I know what my responsibility is in playing that tune. A lot players today – because they come from strictly a "by-the-numbers" attitude – their playing takes on a patternistic attitude. I never went there. I'm always composing. I'm always trying to play lines. It's sort of like what Carl Fontana does. Carl never went there either, and Carl is just filled with thousands of just great ideas and lines that he plays. And that's a whole other kind of craft.

Have you been teaching some people to play jazz trombone recently?

BW: Yes, I'm at USC. I'm professor of jazz trombone over there.

For the classically-trained musician, how do you get them over their initial, "Oh, God, what am I going to play?" mentality?

BW: Case in point. One of the players came to me for about five semesters. And he for the most part was a strictly legit player, but he had signed up because he wanted to

pick up on some of this stuff. At the beginning it was touch-and-go because his approach was so stiff. Well, he had a wonderful sound. He had a really good sound and some good technique and everything. But a lot of these guys, like you say, don't have a clue as to what it is they're supposed to play when the time comes. So, what I do is I use the Jamey Aebersold CDs, and I have thousands of them.

I start pretty simply with somebody like that, with just some simple blues. And try to get them to develop motion, because I find, with my student who would stop and wind up on a completely unrelated note, he had little phrase endings I had to talk him out of doing. And when he would do that, he sort of intimidated himself with that. So, I stopped him from doing that. Every time I would hear him do: (*sings E-C \flat -B \flat -A*) I would simply say, "No, no, no, no. I don't want you to end your phrases like that. I want you to end them with the idea that you've got something to go on to;" because when you do that, that's finalized. You can't really connect. You've got to connect everything. So, what we usually would do is: I would play a chorus, they would play a chorus. We'd trade choruses back and forth so there's a frame of reference, so they actually hear what it is that I want them to do. And finally, I would sit down and explain to them, "Now, what I am going to do now is ... When I play this chorus I'm going to use a minimum of notes." Now, when I did that, that didn't work, because in order to play that way, and that's what guys like Carl Fontana can do, you've got to know what the structure is. You have to know what the structure is in order to identify the common tones throughout the chords. So, if you don't really know that you've got to look around and do what we call "hunt and peck," like playing the typewriter.

So, a little while ago with him I thought, you know what, "Play me a chromatic scale." He plays: (*sings an ascending chromatic scale*). "Okay, great. Can you play it at all different tempos?" The guy says, "Yeah." "What I want you to do now," and I played a chorus, "I'm going to just play a lot of random groups of chromatic things over these changes, and you'll notice that almost anything works." And so I did that, and a kind of light went on. He started doing that, but he would come down every so often: (*sings E \flat , C \flat , B \flat , A \flat descending*) at the end of the phrase. A lot of classical guys do that; they think that it's hip, and it certainly isn't hip. So, I just made him stop doing that, and I said, "Go do, not perpetual motion, but I just want you to keep moving throughout the time so you feel what it is that is going on here, and you'll actually sound like a hip jazz player." Because these days a lot of jazz players are just simply playing a lot of chromatics, a lot of pentatonic scales and a lot of things, and it's obviously to me in listening to some of these people that they really don't know what they're doing.

What do you mean by that?

BW: Melodically speaking, they're bereft of any thought whatsoever. And what they've learned to do is play all of these scale patterns. So, I just gave him a lot of those to learn how to do, because that's a good place to start. Because once you actually get a handle on the time and get the notes moving, and get a feel of what the jazz attitude is all about, then you can start making progress. But too many players just sit in this classroom mode, and they look at this rather pedestrian way of going about playing. Finally, when my student left this summer, I thought he had made a tremendous amount of progress. He started to sound less like a legit guy trying to play jazz.

What are your sources of melodic imagination? How do you get inspiration?

BW: Oh, from listening all the time. That is what you get from listening to singers, different kinds of players. You have to listen to players that play that way if you want to go that way, because that stuff doesn't come from out of the blue; it's an attitude. People like Stan Getz, for example, Al Cohn, Lester Young. Charlie Parker, for instance, would utilize an awful lot of materials in his playing. Clark Terry, Phil Woods. These guys are great compositional players. They're not just playing scales. Actually that just irritates me when I hear people just doing that, because they're simply relying on this scale and that scale rather than trying to be a composer. You can hear that in different players. I'm not going to name any names.

No, I know exactly what you're saying. I'm with you.

BW: Well, you can hear it for yourself, I don't even have to get specific about these guys, but we hear them, they're out there all the time. I guess the best of these guys was John Coltrane, but a lot of people don't understand that Coltrane came from another place in the beginning. He came from a very melodic place when he started out, so his credentials were really firmly established.

Yeah, if you listen to "Blue Train"¹⁰⁶ he's incredibly melodic.

BW: Yeah, I cut my teeth on that record. But John chose to experiment in another direction from that. I understand that direction. I can't identify with it because I don't think that way. Sometimes, though, I will get into some pentatonic foray, but I'll only use it as a flavor every so often, it won't be the main course. It's sort of like sitting down to the supper table and eating nothing but chocolate pudding all night; it kind of gets tiresome after awhile.

Can you trace the growth points in your improvising ability, any special landmarks, how you developed?

BW: I can look back. In the beginning time it was pretty much of a Dixieland approach, because that's what I played mostly when I was a young man, mixed with ballads. I always loved to play ballads. And then, I started discovering guys like J. J. and Frank Rosolino, and I wanted to go there. And then, after that went down, I ran across Fontana and Urbie Green. I have to say that my playing at one point was a kind of compendium of those two guys. That was around the early sixties, that period of time. I drew from those sources. And then as things got into the seventies, I got into an absolute technique kind of an approach, that, as I look back on it, was very impressive technically, but it was really kind of boring.

I thought it was pretty exciting, too.

BW: Well, yeah. But technique for the sake of technique doesn't cut it. I think a lot of the things I did were for the purpose of speed and agility rather than content, and I have since ... I started around 1982, when my dad passed away something happened to my approach. I sort of cut back on the number of notes and number of choruses per tune. It would not be unusual for me to play fifteen or twenty choruses on a tune. I

¹⁰⁶ John Coltrane (1957). *Blue Train*, (1985 CD reissue) Blue Note CDP-7 46095 2.

did an album in London called *Bill Watrous in London*.¹⁰⁷ On Mole Jazz. It's hard to get, but it's the most absolute diarrhea of the chops, tremendous speed and stuff like that going on, but there was so much of the same stuff going on. Every time I listen to it, I think, "My God, stop already!" It's like that story about Miles Davis going to Coltrane and saying, "John, why do you play so long?" And Coltrane says, "Well, Miles, I just get going and I just don't know when and where to stop." Miles looks at him and says, "John, then why don't you just take the horn out of your face?" It was that way. Some of the cuts are like fifteen minutes long and it's just ridiculous. Nobody can listen to that stuff.

Well, you're hard on yourself.

BW: Always have been. I get that from Carl, too, when I talk to him. He'll say, "Man, my chops are down. I've got no chops. I can't play." And nothing could be further from the truth.

I was hoping to catch him last weekend in Columbus, and unfortunately, I guess there was a mix-up with their promotions manager and he really wasn't coming to play. I was disappointed.

BW: Who was that?

Carl Fontana.

BW: When was he there?

He was lined up to play with the Columbus Jazz Orchestra. They were going to do a Kenton Tribute, featuring Carl as a soloist. But I guess it didn't come through, so they had a drummer from Kenton's band instead.

BW: That's too bad, because last week Carl and I were in St. Louis. We played at a club there called Generations, and it was recorded.

I would have loved to have been there.

BW: It was incredible. Totally amazing.

What a pleasure! Let's see. What are some of the things you do when you practice? Do you have a routine?

BW: Yeah, the first thing I do is establish being able to play at all. I start about middle register, which for me is around F or G above the staff. I'll just establish that without any stress or any effort, making sure the air vibrates at that level. Just sustain there for a while, just play without making any adjustments or changes in my embouchure. And then I'll start to go up and come down from there, and just establish it. Get the basic set-up. Just basically get warmed up and get ready to play. I'll do that with some smooth phrases, some natural breaks, some flexibility, but basically sustained. Now, once I've done that, then I'll come in here and put the Aebersolds on. Maybe I'll go through "Crazy Rhythm," or one of the Dexter Gordon tunes, or put on the *Burnin'* CD¹⁰⁸ and go through "Cherokee" in all twelve keys. Or put on a couple of ballads

¹⁰⁷ Bill Watrous (1982). *Bill Watrous in London*, Mole Jazz 7.

and through those – those I'll probably do first. But once I get that going, once I get that moving I'm pretty comfortable with it, it's set for the day.

I didn't know if you had any special exercises you liked to do.

BW: No, I don't have anything written down.

But then again, thinking about what you said about the Arban book it makes sense.

BW: Did I say something about the Arban book?

Yeah, in one of the interviews you did you said, I think it was your high school director gave you an Arban book ...

BW: Yeah, he gave me one. I didn't get very far with it. I didn't establish any purpose for it. Somehow, it was just all notes, you know? And I should have dealt with it, but I didn't.

Here's a scenario for you. Let's say you have a student who has a new tune that they don't know that you're going to help them to learn. What are some of the things you go through with them?

BW: It depends on the kind of tune it is. Let's say it's a ballad. First thing I will do is go up to the front of the book where the lyrics are, and I will get them to read through the lyrics to me, just read them off. And I'll say, "Now, what does that mean to you?" "Uh, I guess it sounds real romantic." "Ah, we're making progress!" Because most young people wouldn't know romance if it jumped up and bit them in the ass! Because it's gone. It's something that's left our culture now, which is too bad, but that's what they've chosen to do. Now all the singers, for instance, all they do is yell and scream.

I saw you at one of those workshops not too long ago, and you had said something about trying to find a pop song that had a melody that was going to be memorable and something lasting. I've been occasionally flipping around some of those pop stations trying to listen to something current.

BW: You can't find one, can you?

I haven't found anything yet. I think you're right on the nose.

BW: You won't. They have decided it's no longer nice to ... The last great music I heard Chicago did. I mean nice melodies, romantic, wonderful, warm things, and you don't hear that. And forget Celine Dion, you can have her!

JG: (Laughs.) Well, back to the question. So you have them read the lyrics ...

BW: What I'll do is I'll make them read the lyrics to me and I'll say, "Okay, what do you get from that?" And I will make them explain to me what that means to them. "So, okay, then you have to deal with this tune from a warm standpoint." And I will go and put on a tune like, "I've Grown Accustomed to Your Face," and I will let them

108 Various (2000). *Burnin'!!! Up-Tempo Jazz Standards, Vol. 61*. New Albany: IN: Jamey Aebersold. This has "Indiana," "Secret Love," "Cherokee" in twelve keys, "The Way You Look Tonight" and other tunes.

go ahead and try to play it. I usually stop them after about eight bars and say, "Now listen to this." And I will go ahead and play this tune. I say, "What you have to do is think of yourself not as a trombone player, but as a singer." As a good singer. And you have to play this song as if you are delivering the lyric. And the reason you look at the lyrics is the lyrics not only tell you what the attitude should be, but they tell you how to phrase the thing. Play the tune according to how the phrases go with regards to the lyric. Do that, and you're succeeding. It doesn't have to be a lot of vibrato, it doesn't have to be way up high or anything; it just has to be nice.

That's what I do with that. Other types of tunes I just simply let them know what the tune is about. Then I put the Aebersold on and let them start. They'll play a chorus and I'll play one. We'll go back and forth, and we'll do that a couple times through the ten or twelve choruses that it is in a row. And then, I will sit back in my chair, put my feet up, and make them play the whole damn thing, top to bottom, all twelve choruses. And when I do that I will tell them, "Look, there are twelve choruses of this thing, counting the head. You need to be able to still be saying something at the end of the tune, so don't try to kill the enemy in the first or second chorus. You've got to save some meat for the end of this thing." So I talk to them about pacing. If you're going to play a long time, you have to be able to play a long time. It's like running. If you go out and you're trying for a four-minute mile immediately, and you're not used to doing that, you will die by the end of the mile. You'll be done for.

That'll be it for the day!

BW: I barely run a ten-minute mile, and that's what I do when I go out. That's what I tell them. Concentrate on that. Concentrate on being a composer, because your scales will get you just so far. And then you run out of things to do other than scales, and it gets really boring.

What are some suggestions you have? I know when you are a younger improviser you get stuck and then it's "Now what am I going to play?" What are some suggestions you have for your students when they run into that situation?

BW: You tell them to drop back five yards and punt. Actually that's not as funny as it sounds. You simply stop for a minute, and then regroup, and start off in another direction. I mean, it's the only thing you can do. If you haven't reached a point where one idea leads to another and another and another, like Carl. When you hear Fontana play it's like what his name implies: *fontana* means "fountain" in Italy.

Oh, that's great.

BW: And he's like a fountain, he simply gushes forth all the time, and he's never short of an idea. But if you can't do that, you're going to have to stop for a minute and regroup. And we all know what that sounds like.

Yeah, it's like, "Hmmm?" But you know, sometimes silence is a good thing.

BW: Yeah. Listen, those little pregnant pauses are very, very effective, providing you know where you left off so you can begin as a continuation of your final idea. Or you don't necessarily have to do that. You can start off in another whole direction. There are no hard and fast rules here. There just really aren't. That's the thing about improvisation; there is all sorts of room for shrinkage and expansion. And not everybody plays alike. There are a lot of good players who stand up and play nothing but *Klang-*

*farbenmelodies*¹⁰⁹ all the time, and there are a lot of people who don't know about the fable of "The Emperor's New Clothes"¹¹⁰ and they love that. And in all fairness, a lot of that can be very interesting, too. We call that a series of happy accidents.

That's fun. It's fascinating talking to you guys, because every one of you has a completely different approach from each other.

BW: Well, you're going to talk to most people who begin talking mathematics to you. *I've been talking to older guys first, so actually nobody has been like that.*

BW: Okay, good, because you're not going to get that from us, because we don't come from there and we never learned to play that way. And I feel sorry for these other cats, because a lot of that that's going to happen is by the numbers. And when you play by the numbers the real compositional aspect is gone.

Yeah, it changes things quite a bit. Well, kind of related to that, did you have any mentoring experiences as you were coming along as a player?

BW: Oh, yeah, sure. Everybody has those. I had people in my hometown who were very brilliant about that, some older players. My dad saw that I played with these guys instead of my peers, which I found slightly irritating at first, but then I began to understand. And these guys taught me tunes. Lots of tunes. And we played them all the time and they stuck. Then I got into high school, actually, and our band director, Richard Benvenuti. He was really very brilliant and ahead of his time in lots of ways. And he absolutely directed us ... He made us feel like professionals even though we were high school kids. That was very important for him to do. He allowed us to call him "Dick."

Oh, really? Even back then, that's unusual.

BW: Yeah, and it was always like fellow musicians. And it made a lot of difference to our development right there, because we all felt like we were players, which we were.

Then, of course, after that when I was in the service. There were some really good players that I knew, like a trombone player named Sandy Weishaupt. I really enjoyed his playing a lot. He passed away a while ago. He could really play. He was another guy who really loved Fontana, and was kind of like him in a way. But he was a big help. And then, of course, after getting to New York there were all kinds of them. Everybody I played with that I enjoyed playing with became a mentor, because I would just pick their brains 'til death. I ran across a Dixieland player, very good people like that, Kenny Deverne, a very good clarinet player, guys like that. I wound up playing with Kai Winding. I got a gig with him and traveled on the road with him for quite a while. That was a nice experience. And then I discovered Urbie Green, and that got very serious.

¹⁰⁹ According to Sadie (Ed. 1980), a *Klangfarbenmelodie* is "a term coined by Schönberg in his *Harmonielehre* (1911) to denote a succession of tone-colours related to one another in a way analogous to a relationship between pitches in a melody. By this he implied that the timbral transformation of a single pitch could be perceived as equivalent to a melodic succession, that it, that one could invoke tone-colour as a structural element in a composition." (p. 96, volume 10, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. London: Macmillan, Stanley Sadie, editor)

Well, I'll tell you how that came about. When I was in the service I was in a bar in Yacusca called The Crossroads. They had a record player in there, an early stereo system and they had records. And one of the records was an RCA Victor recording of Urbie's called, *Let's Face the Music and Dance*.¹¹¹ An incredible record, and some of the best trombone playing that's ever, ever been done. And I made this poor girl play that thing over and over and over and over all night long. And Shore Patrol finally came and extracted me from the place. Later on I went and bought the record at the PX on the base. I was on an aircraft carrier at the time and we were docked in there. I sort of lived with that. And, that record made me take a whole different look at how I was supposed to play ballads and the trombone in general, so that changed an awful lot of stuff. And then, of course, associations with Fontana really brought me into more focus of what I wanted to do.

Now, are you a doodle tonguer?

BW: Yes. I hear a lot of real negative stuff about doodle tonguers, and I've read it in the *ITA* magazine these days by people who don't think that it's a viable way to tongue. And I'm getting a little upset with those guys. Steve Turre has taken some doodle tonguers to task.

I was just talking to Buddy Baker a little about this and he said that he thinks – he has all kinds of respect for people who can doodle tongue – but he (as a teacher) doesn't believe that everyone can actually do it and still get a good sound, and that's his major concern.

BW: Well, that is true, and that's the case with any kind of tonguing, isn't it?

That's true. Everybody's mouth is shaped just a little differently, so it's going to happen in different ways.

110 *The Emperor's New Clothes* is the childhood fable by Hans Christian Andersen that tells of a king who was quite vain and loved to wear fancy clothes – so much so it was said he would change clothes every hour! Well, some charlatans heard of the king's love of fine clothes and devised a ploy. They proposed to the king that they would make him a suit of the finest cloth. The cloth was so fine, they said, that only the most discerning eye could see it. The king was very excited about his new suit and paid the "tailors" some gold. After about two weeks they came back and said they needed more gold because they had to spin more cloth in order to complete the project. Finally, the suit was finished. The tailors showed this "suit" to the king. "Ah, it is stunning!" the king exclaimed. "What say you?" the king asked his assistants. So as not to be fired or to have their heads chopped off, the king's assistants agreed that the invisible suit was attractive, "Yes, it's amazing!" The tailors encouraged the king to try it on. "Your highness, you must remove your clothes so you can try this on properly." Standing there buck-naked, the king put on the "suit." "Ah, this cloth is so fine it feels as if I am wearing nothing at all!" "Your highness," the tailors said, "you should go show off your new clothes." This idea appealed to the king's vanity. So, the king and his assistants set upon the village streets. The puzzled village adults shouted their accolades, "Oh, yes, what an attractive suit!" "I don't think I've ever seen one as glorious the world over!" From overhead, however, a child yelled, "The king doesn't have on any clothes!" All of a sudden, having found the courage to speak the truth, others started to yell the same thing. The now red-faced king finished parading the village, however, not willing to admit that the child was indeed correct.

111 Urbie Green (1957). *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, RCA SP-1667, (2004 CD reissue) Cloud 9 #43392.

BW: Some people simply cannot conceive it. They can't do it at all. If they can't do it, they should find something else to do. One of my students, a very good player, just can't quite get the hang of doodle tonguing, but he's got a really good soft double tongue and it works great for him. It's not for everybody. See, I never really had a good single tongue, I never did.

That's really surprising.

BW: Oh, I never did. It shouldn't be surprising. Carl doesn't have one either. I can get around with it, but I can't get around at any tempos at all. It was always a hang up to me to have to face that, and when I started developing that, that enabled me to do some of the things I wanted to do. You get there however you can get there.

Yeah, I think so. I'm just curious, when did you start doing multiphonics?

BW: I was doing those when I was in high school.

I had a feeling about that. Thinking about you and Phil Wilson, I thought, "Well, you guys are almost the same age." Considering that, I figured you guys probably developed that independently of each other.

BW: Yeah. I ought to practice those more. I haven't been practicing them lately. They're becoming less effective because I've been doing other things. Those are things you really have to work out and plan for. You've got to adjust your ear to how they sound.

What kind of feelings or advice do you have on professionalism for students who are going to become professional [jazz] trombone players?

BW: Well, I would recommend that you complete your education so you can fall back on teaching, because there's nothing out there. I mean, relatively little of importance to be able to hang on to. It's a real closed shop right now. It's that way for a lot of reasons: Because the actual record companies aren't buying any of it. The media doesn't give a damn. I'm talking about TV. It's a fight. It's a struggle to get there. And if you're going to be a professional, you'd better think of having it as part of a teaching situation. Everybody should get their credentials and be able to do that, because that is what it's going to come down to right now. The number of people who actually get famous and well-to-do out of this business are real minimal. There is a small number who get there.

It's that way because the people in power right now are all children of television. It's that way in Las Vegas. There is no music in Las Vegas. There are no bands playing, there is no nothing. There are probably two jazz gigs in all of Las Vegas.

And Carl has one of them.

BW: No, Carl doesn't even have one right now.

Really? Wow.

BW: Yeah. It's absolutely pathetic what's going on. All that money. The problem is the owners of all these casinos are all these young guys, all children of television, and they all want these pre-packaged groups. You know, U2 and all these little, really non-musical, entities. It's sad. It's a sad situation. And I frankly don't see it getting

any better. For a while Bill Clinton was helping a little bit. He was actually really reaching out. I got a nice letter from him on my wall. But everyone got up in arms about Clinton because he had the audacity to pull a few things they thought were uncool. And it was his business what he did.

That's what I thought, too.

BW: The arts are going to get killed while Bush is in there because Bush likes hillbilly music.

Let's get into something else. It's easy to get depressed talking about stuff like that.

BW: Let's move forward.

Who are your seven favorite trombonists of all time?

BW: Let me think about this. I've just got to do seven?

You can do more if you want.

BW: Well, we can't leave out Tommy Dorsey. We can't leave out Jack Teagarden. I have to add J. J. Johnson. We have to have Carl Fontana and Urbie, and Frank Rosolino. Is that six? I've got to toss Roswell Rudd in there, because I love him. But there are so many others, I could go on and on and on. We have to talk about Dick Nash. We have to talk about Chauncey Welsh. We have to talk about Charlie Loper. We've got to talk about Jimmy Cleveland – nobody mentions Jimmy Cleveland much any more. Curtis Fuller. And then we have to go back and talk about Vic Dickenson, and Tyree Glenn, and Wayne Andre.

Is Wayne still up in New York? I was thinking of getting a hold of him.

BW: I'll give you his number. I should have put him in the top seven, because he's an absolutely sensational trombone player and a dear friend of mine. An absolutely brilliant guy. He's one of the great survivors. And Urbie. I remember when I first got into New York and started doing studio work, the tremendous amount of respect that Urbie Green had in the studios. I remember walking into a recording studio, waiting for everyone to come, and finally Urbie walks in and the place used to part like the Red Sea. Absolutely phenomenal. And the ease and grace in which he used to toss off these beautiful things he would play, you know.

We'd all look at Urbie and say, "Wow, that was great!" and he'd just look and say, "Just trying, man." Incredible. He's still around. You should give him a call some time.

I think I might try. Somebody did a dissertation on him not too long ago, but I don't think they asked him these questions.

BW: You might not get a lot out of Urbie. He's a man of few words, but you might try him anyway.

It's worth a shot, if he'd be willing to talk. Last question: Is there any other advice or anything we haven't talked about that you would like to discuss?

BW: Yeah, baseball. No, actually, I have become a singer these days in addition to playing the trombone, and that's been a lot of fun. I come off a little like Chet Baker.

Yeah, you do. It's uncanny.

BW: It's weird, isn't it? By accident, it's just how it is. I tried different ways of singing, different attitudes of doing it. I tried to be Sinatra for a while, which was a miserable failure. Then I took a swipe at Tony Bennettism and that didn't work. Then I tried being hippy-zippy like Mel Tormé and that was awful. And then I thought, "Okay, I'm just going to try singing the way I play." And I did that and out came Chet Baker.

That's fascinating. I guess those are about all the questions I have. Thanks so much for taking the time. I appreciate it. It's wonderful just hearing your ideas on all this to get some insight into what's going on while you're up there playing.

BW: Well, it's been a labor of love and sometimes hate all these years. It isn't always what I want it to be, but I hope that it is.

Yeah. Well, like Urbie said, "Just trying."

BW: That's it.

Thanks a lot.

BW: Hey, it's my pleasure.

Bill Watrous Recordings

As Leader or Featured Guest

- Gary Urwin Jazz Orchestra (2006). *Kindred Spirits*, Summit DCD 448.
Bill Watrous Quartet (2004). *Live in Living Comfort*, Stonequake 002.
The Rob Stonebeck Big Band (2004). *Mad to the Bone*, Stonequake 003.
Bill Watrous with the Temple Jazz Orchestra (2003). *Live*, Temple College, TX.
Bill Watrous Quartet (2000). *Live at the Blue Note*, Half Note 4908.
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- Art Pepper (1979). *Hollywood All-Star Sessions*, Galaxy 4431.

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Kai Winding (1967). *Penny Lane and Time*, Verve V6-8691.
Woody Herman (1967). *Woody Live: East and West*, Columbia CS-9493.
Wes Montgomery (1966). *California Dreaming*, Verve 827842-2.
Jimmy Witherspoon (1965). *Blues for Easy Lovers*, Prestige P7475.
Kai Winding (1965). *In Instrumentals*, Verve V6-8639.
Sarah Vaughan (1965). *Viva! Vaughan*, Mercury SR-60941.
Wes Montgomery (1964). *Talkin' Verve: Roots of Acid Jazz*, Verve 529580.
Wes Montgomery (1964). *Plays the Blues*, Verve 835318-2.
Wes Montgomery (1964). *Verve Masters 14*, Verve, 314-519826-2.

Appendix

An Annotated Review of Published Jazz Trombone Music & Materials

For the purpose of clarity, C4 will be defined as Middle C; any note above that but not reaching the next octave will also be in the fourth octave. The C above Middle C will be defined as C5, etc.

This section will be divided into the following:

- (1) Published Music Books on Playing Jazz Trombone.
- (2) Jazz Etudes, Solos and Duets Specifically Composed for Trombone.
- (3) Published Transcriptions of Solos for Jazz Trombone.

(1) Published Music Books on Playing Jazz Trombone

- ▶ **Baker, David** (1974). *Contemporary Techniques for the Trombone, Vol. 1–6*. NY: Charles Colin.

This is a six volume series, based on Baker's doctoral project from Indiana University. It is set up as follows:

Volume 1 – *Foundation Exercises for the Jazz Player: Vibrato and other Special Effects, Tod-ul Tongue.*

Volume 2 – *Against-the-Grain Playing, Scales and Chords.*

Volume 3 – *The ii–V7 Progression, Turnbacks and Cycles.*

Volume 4 – *A Method for Gaining Facility with the Various Scales, Multiphonics, and Polytonality.*

Volume 5 – *Rhythm and Meter: Polymetric and Multimetric Melodies and Fourths.*

Volume 6 – *Exercises Based on the 12-Tone Row, Uses of Dramatic Devices, Micro Tones.*

- ▶ **Baker, David** (1981). *Ear-Training Tapes for the Musician, Vol. 1–5*. Miami, FL: Studio 24/Belwin CPP.

Obviously an essential part of being a good musician of any style or function is having a developed ear. Baker states: "The jazz player must conceive an idea, place it in a tonal perspective, translate it into actual notes for his instrument, and play; all this in a split second. This demands a very special kind of hearing – an ability to hear *everything* he plays before he plays it" (p. 3). Each volume of this collection focuses on a different task. They are as follows: