

*Sammy Sostice*  
the soldiersessions

The United States Army Field Band  
Jazz Ambassadors





# The United States Army Field Band

The Musical Ambassadors of the Army  
*Washington, DC*

**B**uilding on a relationship that began in 2001 with *The Legacy of Sammy Nestico*, the Jazz Ambassadors and Sammy Nestico are proud to present this milestone in the Perspectives educational series, *Sammy Nestico: The Soldier Sessions*.

Sammy Nestico's name is synonymous with big band literature. Widely recognized as the first jazz educator to provide professional quality big band music at the middle school, high school, and college levels, he served as Chief Arranger for "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, Chief Arranger for The United States Air Force Band's Airmen of Note, and Arranger for the Count Basie Orchestra.

Sammy Nestico's dedication to big band writing has been a lifelong endeavor that continues well into his nineties. His output of new music is still going strong, and the history of the big band itself can be heard throughout this recording. Some of the selections are older, reworked by Nestico for this project, and some were composed a few days before the recording session.

*Sammy Nestico: The Soldier Sessions* holds special historical significance: for the first time, Nestico has written compositions and arrangements specifically for the Jazz Ambassadors. He did this with the intent of recording them and making the sheet music available to students and educators as part of the Perspectives educational series, free of charge. Many of these arrangements are available for free upon request. Now the next generation of jazz musicians can enjoy professional quality big band music by one of the greatest arrangers in the history of jazz, Sammy Nestico, with reference recordings performed by America's Big Band, the Jazz Ambassadors. This album was recorded in August 2015.





## **The Jazz Ambassadors**

is the official touring big band of the United States Army. Formed in 1969, this 19-member ensemble has received great acclaim at home and abroad performing America's greatest original art form, jazz.

Concerts by the Jazz Ambassadors are programmed to entertain all types of audiences. The band's diverse repertoire includes big band swing, bebop, Latin, contemporary jazz, standards, popular tunes, Dixieland, vocals, and patriotic selections, many of which are written or arranged by members of the Jazz Ambassadors.

The Jazz Ambassadors has appeared in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, Japan, India, and throughout Europe. Recent notable performances include concerts at the Toronto Jazz Festival, the Richmond Jazz Festival at Maymont, the Kennedy Center Honors, the Jazz Education Network Conference, and an appearance on the Colbert Report. Gordon Goodwin, Bobby Shew, Ernie Watts, and the Dave Brubeck All-Star Quintet are just a few of the outstanding jazz artists who have shared the stage with the Jazz Ambassadors.

The band has been featured in joint concerts with Marvin Hamlisch and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony Pops, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, and the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall. The Jazz Ambassadors' rigorous touring schedule and reputation for excellence has earned it the title "America's Big Band."

# Notes from Sammy

## *Toni* [5:48]

“Toni” is dedicated to Toni Tennille of the group The Captain and Tennille, who Nestico remembers as one of the nicest people he ever worked with. Re-written for the Jazz Ambassadors, the use of flute and vibraphone gives “Toni” some fun and unusual sound combinations.

Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley, guitar; Master Sergeant Timothy Young, piano



## *Cell Talk* [4:01]

Originally entitled “The Number You Have Reached Has Been Disconnected. If You Think This Is An Error, Hang Up and Dial Again,” Sammy decided the title was too long, renaming it “Cell Talk.” The piece incorporates flute, piccolo, and xylophone, and cell phone-like effects are heard throughout. Written just weeks before the recording session, “Cell Talk” is a great example of Sammy’s lifelong dedication to composing new music.

Sergeant First Class Todd Harrison, drums



## *Moonlight On The Ganges* [3:45]

Influenced by vocal renditions by Frank Sinatra and Sarah Vaughan, Sammy wrote his arrangement of “Moonlight on the Ganges” to introduce the song to a new generation. After a powerful introduction, the chart showcases an oboe solo, playing the part of the “snake charmer.” The band then takes over, playing the melody with a heavy swing feel, leading into a tenor saxophone solo. The arrangement ends with another appearance from the oboe.

Master Sergeant Daniel Brimhall, oboe; Sergeant First Class Patrick Shook, tenor saxophone

## *Close Enough For Love* [4:33]

For an alto saxophone feature, Sammy chose Johnny Mandel's "Close Enough For Love." "The melody of this tune is so pretty," writes Sammy, "I knew it was perfect for this album. I think Johnny Mandel is the prettiest arranger in the world. I try to do a Johnny Mandel composition on all of my albums." The arrangement is a slow ballad, and includes a short double time section for the improvised solo.

Sergeant Major Andrew Layton, alto saxophone

## *Shirley* [4:22]

Written as a dedication to his wife Shirley, this arrangement is a return to Sammy's roots with the Count Basie Orchestra. The theme is based on the rhythm of his wife's name. Sammy writes, "Isn't it amazing how, with as complicated as the world is today, you can fall in love with the simplest of things?"

Master Sergeant Timothy Young, piano; Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley, guitar;  
Staff Sergeant Hamilton Price, bass

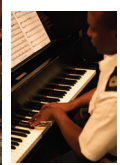
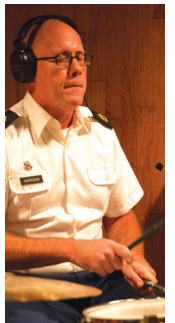
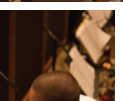


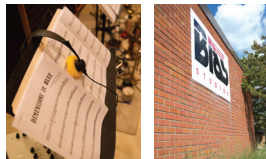
## *I'll Follow My Secret Heart* [5:53]

A piano feature, this waltz is another classic that Sammy wanted to re-introduce to young musicians. "I remember back when I played trombone, I loved to play over those chord changes. What great changes!" Sammy's use of the full band harmonizing the melody is another classic example of the Nestico sound.

Master Sergeant Timothy Young, piano; Sergeant First Class Jeff Adams, trombone;  
Master Sergeant Michael Johnston, trumpet; Sergeant First Class Bradford J. Danho, tenor saxophone







## *Hip Music Box* [5:31]

“Hip Music Box” reflects Sammy’s lifelong quest to further the art of big band composition. “I had an idea for a tune where the big band would start and end sounding like a small toy orchestra, but in the middle would sound like a regular big band.” The beginning and end of the arrangement includes some special effects, including a special drum set to mimic the sound of a toy orchestra.

Sergeant First Class Todd Harrison, drums; Staff Sergeant Luke Brimhall, trombone;  
Staff Sergeant Dustin Mollick, baritone saxophone



## *A Cool Breeze* [5:33]

This arrangement is a “sequel” to a chart that Sammy wrote many years ago for the Count Basie Orchestra, “A Warm Breeze.” It demonstrates the melodic side to Sammy’s writing. “I’m a melodist,” writes Sammy. “I love melody, and I’m very proud of the melody that I wrote for this song.” Sammy again expands the jazz orchestra with his use of French horns, and the blend achieved with the flutes and flugelhorns is another staple of his signature writing style.

Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley, guitar;  
Sergeant First Class Bradford J. Danho, tenor saxophone



## *Tippin' In* [4:27]

Sammy’s arrangement of this Erskine Hawkins composition features the band in a gospel setting. After hearing a version of this tune by the great organist Shirley Scott, Sammy decided to arrange it as an organ feature. “Each one of the tunes on this recording has a distinct personality, and this one definitely does. It’s the only tune on the album that features the organ. It feels like we’re all ready for church!”

Master Sergeant Timothy Young, piano; Staff Sergeant Hamilton Price, bass

## *Softly From My Window* [3:45]

This chart is a flugelhorn feature, and begins in a bossa nova feel. To avoid predictability, Sammy changed the end of the song to a waltz feel. "I don't want to write predictable music. If the players and the listener love the music, then I've done my job."

Master Sergeant Michael Johnston, trumpet; Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley, guitar



## *Frankie & Johnny* [5:23]

This arrangement has the classic Sammy Nestico shuffle feel. "I think every tune should have a shuffle. Everyone loves a shuffle, even hip hop people!" The chart gives the band an opportunity to feature a number of soloists, and is what Sammy calls "toe-tapping music."

Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley, guitar; Staff Sergeant Thomas C. Davis, trumpet;  
Sergeant First Class Jeff Adams, trombone; Staff Sergeant Dustin Mollick, baritone saxophone



*Sammy Nestico*

# Personnel

Colonel Jim R. Keene, COMMANDER

## DIRECTOR

Chief Warrant Officer Two Daniel Wood

## SAXOPHONES

Sergeant Major Andrew Layton

Sergeant First Class Bradford J. Danho

Sergeant First Class Joshua Fox

Sergeant First Class Patrick Shook

Staff Sergeant Dustin Mollick

## TRUMPETS

Sergeant Major Kevin Watt

Master Sergeant John Altman

Master Sergeant Michael Johnston

Sergeant First Class Liesl Whitaker

Staff Sergeant Thomas C. Davis

## ADDITIONAL MUSICIANS

Sergeant Major Thomas Enokian, mallet percussion; Master Sergeant Daniel Brimhall, oboe

Master Sergeants Robert Cherry and Alan White, Staff Sergeant Selena Adams, horn

Staff Sergeants Pamela Daniels and Gina Sebastian, flute, alto flute, piccolo

## TROMBONES

Sergeant Major Michael Buckley

Sergeant First Class Jeff Adams

Staff Sergeant Luke Brimhall

Staff Sergeant Sean Casey

## PIANO

Master Sergeant Timothy Young

## GUITAR

Staff Sergeant Jonathan Epley

## BASS

Staff Sergeant Hamilton Price

## DRUMS

Sergeant First Class Todd Harrison

# PERSPECTIVES

Perspectives is an ongoing project by the Jazz Ambassadors, providing free resources for big band jazz educators and their students. Selected sheet music is available for free download at:

[ArmyFieldBand.com/perspectives](http://ArmyFieldBand.com/perspectives)



Denotes sheet music will be available upon request

# *Educational Outreach*

The U.S. Army Field Band is the most active supporter of music education of any military organization, producing new educational resources and presenting hundreds of educational programs nationwide each year. The Perspectives project is just one of the many resources available for free at [ArmyFieldBand.com](http://ArmyFieldBand.com).

To learn more about what the Army Field Band can do for you and your students, contact us at:

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

THE US ARMY FIELD BAND

4214 FIELD BAND DRIVE

FORT MEADE MD 20755-5330

PHONE: (301) 677-6586

## *Credits*

Recorded at Bias Studios, Springfield, VA on Aug. 26–29, 2015

Mixed at Avatar Studios, New York, NY on Sep. 2–5, 2015

Mastered at Arf! Mastering, New York, NY, Sep. 2015

Bob Dawson, Recording Engineer; Jim Anderson, Recording Producer & Mix Engineer

Tyler Hartman, Assistant Mix Engineer; Alan Silverman, Mastering Engineer

Chief Warrant Officer Two Daniel Wood, Executive Producer

Sergeant Major Kevin Watt, Staff Sergeant Luke Brimhall, and Staff Sergeant Ricky Furr, Assistant Producers

Sergeant Major Andrew Layton and Sergeant First Class Phillip Johnson, interviews & liner notes

Master Sergeant Scott Vincent and Master Sergeant Brian Spurgeon, graphics & layout

Master Sergeant Jason Stephens, Educational Activities Coordinator

Sergeant First Class Joshua Fox, Jazz Ambassadors Educational Activities Coordinator

Sergeant First Class Paul White, Perspectives Quality Control, scores & parts (Music Coordinator)



- 1 Toni [5:48]
- 2 Cell Talk [4:01]
- 3 Moonlight On The Ganges [3:45]
- 4 Close Enough For Love [4:33]
- 5 Shirley [4:22]
- 6 I'll Follow My Secret Heart [5:53]
- 7 Hip Music Box [5:31]
- 8 A Cool Breeze [5:33]
- 9 Tippin' In [4:27]
- 10 Softly From My Window [3:45]
- 11 Frankie & Johnny [5:23]



ArmyFieldBand.com