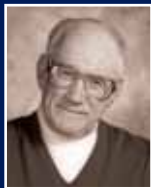


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THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD BAND

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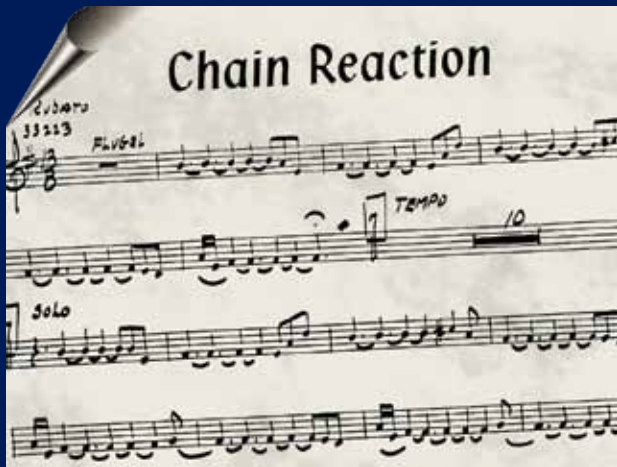
# JAZZ AMBASSADORS

## *The Legacy of* HANK LEVY

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Washington, D.C.



*"The Musical Ambassadors of the Army"*

The Jazz Ambassadors is the United States Army's premier touring jazz orchestra. As a component of The United States Army Field Band of Washington, D.C., this internationally acclaimed organization travels thousands of miles each year to present jazz, America's national treasure, to enthusiastic audiences throughout the world.

The band has performed in all fifty states, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Japan, and India. Notable performances include appearances at the Montreux, Brussels, North Sea, Toronto, and Newport jazz festivals.

Concerts, school assemblies, clinics, music festivals, and radio and television appearances are all part of the Jazz Ambassadors' yearly schedule.

Many of the members are also composers and arrangers whose writing helps create the band's unique sound. Concert repertoire includes big band swing, bebop, contemporary jazz, popular tunes, and dixieland.

Whether performing in the United States or representing our country overseas, the band entertains audiences of all ages and backgrounds by presenting the American art form, jazz.



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*The Legacy of*  
**HANK LEVY**

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*About This Recording*

The Jazz Ambassadors of The United States Army Field Band presents the second in a series of recordings honoring the lives and music of individuals who have made significant contributions to big band jazz.

Designed primarily as educational resources, these recordings are a means for young musicians and their instructors to know and appreciate the best of the music and musicians of previous generations, and to understand the stylistic developments that led to the current repertoire.

The Jazz Ambassadors has a special relationship with Mr. Levy that dates back to the 1970s, when the band was known as the Studio Band. Alumni of Hank's jazz program at Towson State University have become members of the Jazz Ambassadors, and the band has had the pleasure of working with him on many occasions. It was a special privilege to have Mr. Levy supervise the making of this recording.

This compact disc was recorded in 1997 at Devers Hall, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, using multi-track digital equipment. This recording was reprinted in 2008.

*The Legacy of*  
HANK LEVY

*For Gloria*

*A Moment with Hank Levy*

“Can you imagine a blues tune with five, seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen beats to a measure, or an easy-going shuffle in nine, ten, or twelve? How about a Latin chart in seven, eleven, or fifteen? Well, why not? The ‘new’ time signatures add extra lift to traditional jazz feels, and call for creative thinking to make the melodies fit. For my taste, the old clichés no longer work. This album represents some thirty years of my experimentation with odd meters.”

“Stan Kenton, one of the most influential names in big band music, started recording my odd-meter charts as early as 1969, and his publishing company, Creative World, spread the concept internationally. Another big band leader, Don Ellis, who also used my charts on most of his recordings, was a creative writer who featured odd meters in his own compositions. I am most grateful to have been associated with

these two artists, whose philosophy of music coincided with my own. They both encouraged new and progressive jazz.”

“Big band jazz is in danger of stagnation. Too many bands that are left are just playing music from the past. We need new ensembles that are progressive in their thinking and performance. The Jazz Ambassadors is one of those bands that deserves our backing and encouragement. It makes me so proud to be associated with a group that displays such first-rate musicianship and maturity. My thanks to Chief Warrant Officer Freddie Vinson, Jr., and the talented members of the Jazz Ambassadors for a super performance.”



## *Biography*

Henry J. (Hank) Levy was born in Baltimore on September 27, 1927. Like any other child of that era, he was raised with the opportunity to hear a variety of music, ranging from favorite Sousa marches to the latest Tommy Dorsey hits broadcast live on coast to coast radio. Surrounded by the sounds of the big bands, Hank's interest in that art form developed at an early age.

These early listening experiences laid the foundation for what would become his life's work, the composition and teaching of a specifically American musical genre, jazz.

He began taking saxophone lessons while in grade school. Even as a youngster, he wanted to write his own music and by age twelve had completed his first of many compositions. While still in high school, he was asked to join Ken Hanna's band, filling a void left by the many Baltimore musicians called to duty in the armed services during World War II. Ken, a former trumpet player and arranger for Stan Kenton, introduced Hank to the big band scene, which included Stan Kenton's recordings and charts. Reminiscing, Hank recalls "what a kick it was, getting Kenton manuscripts to work on."

After graduation, Hank served as a musician in the U.S. Navy from 1945–1948. He returned home and worked with his father and uncle in the family business, the Independent Beef Company, dealing in custom meats, fruits, vegetables, and fine wines. While helping out at the store, Hank often worked on his compositions, sometimes to the impatience of customers. "I used to tell my father, 'Just let me finish one more score page.'" He attended Peabody Conservatory for a year, but his talent and connections led him in another direction that would be a stepping stone to his future.

In January of 1953, Hank decided to visit Ken Hanna, who had relocated to California. Hank recalls the experience: "Ken was still writing for the Kenton band and had asked me if I had any charts I could bring with me. He told me that the Kenton band was at the Palladium

and would be rehearsing there. We would take the charts over and see if Stan would run them down for me. Stan was very gracious and gave me some time in front of the band. He said the charts were OK, but not right for his band. Stan said, 'You can't really write for this band yet. You'd have to spend some time with the band to know the guys and their personalities so that you could write more personally for the band.' He said that he saw some things, and to keep on writing.

"The band took a break and then Bob Giga went to talk to Stan and gave his notice. Stan looked at Ken Hanna and said, 'Where...am I gonna find a baritone (sax) player?' Ken turned around and pointed at me! Now when a guy like Ken Hanna recommends somebody, Stan will act on it. He came back right away and offered me the job. I told Stan that I really wanted the job, but had some reservations. 'I want you to be happy with what I'm doing as a player. Let me play first and then if you like it, OK.' He said, 'OK, sit in the band.' I said that I didn't have a horn and he said, 'You can use Giga's.'

"So, I've got about five minutes to become a bari player, I'm running through some things in a closet, trying



*Don Dennis, Buddy Childers, Bill Holman,  
Lee Konitz, and Hank Levy*

to figure out Bob Gioga's setup, and I hear them getting ready to start. I'm scared to death—I mean, look who's on that stage: Lee Konitz, Bill Holman, Ritchie Kamuca, Frank Rosolino, George Roberts, Buddy Childers, Conti Candoli, Maynard Ferguson...and me! I tell you, I was about to soil my Pampers! Then a guy walks up to a microphone and says, 'CBS presents live, from coast to coast, *A Concert in Miniature* featuring the



Stan Kenton Orchestra.' Every Tuesday they used to broadcast these things. I looked over to where Bob Gioga was sitting and offered his horn back; he just waived his hand, as if to say, 'No thank-you.' Anyway, I survived, and Stan said, 'Let's go.' I called home and said, 'I'm going with the Kenton band, and—by the way—could you send me enough money for a baritone sax?' ”

After a six-month tenure with the band, Hank returned home to the family business. It was during this time that he became more determined to develop his compositional talents, and began to focus his efforts in that direc-



*Don Ellis and Hank Levy*

tion. In 1958, he got his first commission when Sal Salvador, a friend from the Kenton band, hired him to write for Sal's all brass big band in New York. Hank contributed many charts over the next three years and experienced the thrill of having his music recorded for the first time.

Around this time, Dave Brubeck's album *Time Out* featured odd-meter compositions. Then, the 1962 Grammy Award winning album, *Adventures in Time: A Concerto for Jazz Orchestra*, was released by the Stan Kenton Orchestra. This album, written and arranged by Johnny Richards, acted as a catalyst for Hank's experiments in odd-meter music. At the same time, Hank was studying Bartók quartets and Stravinsky's works. To try his forays into odd meters, Hank organized his own rehearsal band. His lead trumpet player, Glenn Stuart, met trumpeter Don Ellis while on a summertime tour. At the time, Don was studying Indian tabla playing, a rhythmically complex musical form. Later, when Don formed his own band in California, he hired Glen to play lead trumpet. Glen called Hank and said, "You and Don are experimenting along the same lines. Why don't you send us some charts?" As a result, Hank started writing for Don Ellis' band in 1965 and continued for the next ten years.

During this period, Towson State College had organized a ten or eleven piece stage band. Hank was hired to write, conduct, and provide a direction for the jazz program, as well as to build a jazz library. Since he had not finished a college degree, the faculty listed him as a Visiting Guest Lecturer with the stipulation that he finish a music degree at the college. While keeping up with teaching and composing, he took classes the next two years—often sitting beside his own students!



*Hank Levy introducing the Kenton band at Towson State University (Stan Kenton, far left)*

Stan Kenton heard Hank's Towson State College ensemble performing the music Hank wrote for Don Ellis' band at the Intercollegiate Jazz Festival in Quinnipiac, Connecticut. Stan, a fan of Don Ellis, hired Hank to write for the Kenton ensemble. They continued to collaborate until Stan's death in 1979. Hank frequently served as guest conductor for live performances and recordings of his own music, and as an instructor and host for the Kenton clinics, which were held nationwide.

The Levy name began to attract students from around the country to Towson State, and the growing program attracted the attention of the music department chairman. Hank was summoned to the chairman's office where he was told, "Mr. Levy, we do not want to be known as a 'jazz college.'" Hank replied, "Sir, you are too late."

Hank retired from Towson State University in 1991, but continues to write by commission. Many of his older works are available through a variety of publishing companies. He directs the Towson State Alumni Jazz Ensemble and is also active with several rehearsal bands in the Baltimore area. On February 25, 1997, Hank Levy was appointed Professor Emeritus at Towson State, continuing his long-standing and esteemed relationship with the school. He and his music continue to be an inspiration to students and professional musicians alike.



## *Program Notes: A Levy Perspective*

### *Whiplash* (1973)

“This was recorded by Don’s band on *Soaring*. It starts out as a funk tune in 7/4, features a solo for development, then moves into 14/8. It has an ethnic flavor that hints at Bulgarian or Greek folk music. Each 14/8 bar is divided into 2+2+3+3+2+2 or 3+3+2+2+2+2. One of the guys in the Jazz Ambassadors said, ‘I never thought I’d go home singing in 14/8 meter, and I can’t get it out of my mind!’”

### *On Green Dolphin Street* (1974)

“This is one of those great standards that I’ve always loved. I’ve heard it a lot of different ways and wanted to try to arrange it myself. It’s in 4/4, half Latin, half swing. People often ask if I can write in 4/4. Here it is—but there’s sure a lot less competition in five, seven, nine... (laughter).” This is the premier recording of this arrangement.

### *Latintensity* (1991)

“This is one of my more recent things, a high-energy Latin piece that starts in 4/4, then shifts to 12/8. I like 12/8 because you can do so many things with it. I like to sing rhythmic patterns to myself until I become comfortable with them. One thing I made up my mind about,

at an early age, was not to get too crazy with these rhythms. They're already crazy. If you do too much, you get nothing but...yecccchh!" Latintensity has not been previously recorded.

### *Time for a Change* (1976)

"This chart was an experiment to write an odd-meter standard, using traditional melody and harmony. I have always tried to make a point of not writing a piece in  $4/4 + 3/4$  to make a tune in  $7/4$ . It just doesn't work that way. You really have to write a melody that fits in the odd meter, and I've stuck to that. Stan recorded this on *Kenton '76*."

### *Chiapas* (1969)

"This is the first piece of mine ever recorded by the Kenton band, appearing on *Live at Redlands University*. As a matter of fact, it was the first piece I wrote for Stan. Stan recorded it a second time on *Stan Kenton Today*, in 1972." *Chiapas* is a  $5/4$  bossa-nova that develops into a  $5/4$  double-time rock feel.

### *A Time for Love* (1977)

"This is written in the traditional Kenton ballad style. The pattern was to feature the trombones because they were so good together. I added muted trumpet over the top, which I'd heard in Johnny Richard's and Lenny Niehaus' writing. All of us used that format. It

was something we all jumped on because Stan was unique in that he had five trombones in his band. Stan used to get writers together with the band, and run things that we were working on. One day he asked if anyone had a ballad and I said that I did. I wasn't known as the ballad writer, but Stan told me to go ahead. After we played it he said, 'Where have you been hiding that?' He recorded it on his last album, *A Time for Love*."



*Hank Levy with the U.S. Army Studio Band  
(now known as the Jazz Ambassadors)  
August 24, 1970*

### *A Peek into a New Time Zone* (1992)

"This piece is in 14/4 meter, divided 2+2+3+3+2+2 to the bar. It begins as a brass chorale and then develops into a Latin groove in 7/4. We've done so many things to jazz. We've changed it melodically, changed the feel, but until more recently we never changed the meter. I wrote this to prove that someone can write in seven, and maintain that easy Latin groove." *A Peek into a New Time Zone* has not been previously recorded.

## *Alone* (1972)

“I was at Don’s house having a discussion—well, an argument—about his selection of pieces. Every time Don wrote music, he built a mountain. He built fortresses, big, full, and exciting. I told him, ‘You have to give an audience a chance to breathe, to give them a chance to digest what they’ve heard.’ I wrote *Alone* to show Don that you can write odd-meter tunes without making them scream or yell. It’s just a nice and easy bossa-nova in 5/4. Originally, I wrote this as an instrumental, but later we added lyrics. Don recorded the instrumental on *Electric Bath* in 1972, but this vocal version has never been recorded.”

## *Passacaglia and Fugue* (1957)

“This tune is the result of some self-study in classical composition. The passacaglia is an eighteenth-century dance that follows a certain format. First, a passacaglia is always in 3/4 time. Second, it must be in a minor key and voiced polyphonically, with the melody stated in the bass



*Hank with the Jazz Ambassadors, January 1997*

voice. Lastly, the ‘B’ section must modulate to the subdominant. The fugue is in 4/4 time and carries the thematic material in all five voices. I used the improvised solos to create a strong jazz feel, and the climax is a mix of the 3/4 passacaglia theme over the 4/4 fugue. This was the first tune of mine that Don Ellis recorded (*Live at Monterey*). I credit Don with opening me up. He always told me, ‘You gotta be prepared to stick your neck out every time you put pen to paper.’”

### *Chain Reaction* (1971)

“Don called one night, and asked me what I thought about adding strings to the band. What Don came up with was a small symphony orchestra, for which I wrote *Chain Reaction*. I thought the piece should have a classical form, but I didn’t want to leave jazz behind; I wanted the piece to have jazz instincts without being too symphonic. If these types of pieces are written too symphonically, there’s nothing to lean on, jazz-wise. I tried to find that happy medium. *Chain Reaction* is in 13/8, dividing each bar into 3+3+2+2+3. Don dug it and kept it in the book for the next nine years.” *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*, released in 1997, selected *Chain Reaction* to be included on the recording.



*Listening to a playback in the studio, Fort Meade, Maryland*

## *Bibliography*

Hank Levy Interview at his home in Lutherville, MD, conducted by Master Sergeant Greg Reese, 20 February 1997.

Arganian, Lillian. *Stan Kenton: The Man and His Music*. East Lansing, MI: Artistry Press, 1989.

Lee, William. *Stan Kenton: Artistry in Rhythm*. Los Angeles, CA: Creative Press, 1980.

## *Credits*

**Executive Producer:** CW4 Freddie Vinson, Jr. • **Producer:** MSG Greg Reese • **Assistant Producer:** MSG Loran McClung • **Recording/Mix Engineers:** MSG Anthony Sturba, MSG Greg Reese, and MSG Loran McClung • **Auxiliary Percussion Mix:** SSG Todd Harrison • **Mastering Engineer:** Mr. Bill Lightner, Omni Recording • **Hank Levy Interviewer:** MSG Greg Reese • **Writers:** MSG Greg Reese and SSG Jack Wengrosky • **Editors:** SFC Jacqueline Clarys and SFC Tedd Griepentrog • **Graphic Design/Layout:** SGM Pat Dillon and SFC Cathy Miller • **Photos:** cover and pages 3 & 14, MSG Tom Puwalski; page 5, courtesy of the Michael Ochs Archives; page 12, William Bope; page 13, SSG Dana Tan • Recorded in 1997 at Devers Hall, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. This recording is approved by the Department of the Army and is not for resale.

1. Whiplash (4:37).....Hank Levy (*Objective*)  
SFC Darryl Brenzel, alto saxophone soloist
2. On Green Dolphin Street (6:13).....Bronislaw Kaper and Ned Washington  
arr. Hank Levy (*EMI*)  
MSG Greg Pascuzzi, piano soloist; SSG Ben Kono, alto saxophone soloist
3. Latintensity (8:24).....Hank Levy  
SGM Pat Dillon, tenor saxophone soloist; SFC Kevin Watt, trumpet soloist;  
SFC Steve Cosper, guitar soloist;  
SSG Todd Harrison, drum soloist and latin percussionist
4. Time for a Change (6:44).....Hank Levy  
SFC Vince Norman, tenor saxophone soloist
5. Chiapas (7:15).....Hank Levy (*Benton Publishing/Neil Publishing*)  
MSG Lew Chapman, trombone soloist; SFC Darryl Brenzel, alto saxophone soloist
6. A Time for Love (3:28).....John Mandel and Paul Francis Webster  
arr. Hank Levy (*Warner Brothers*)  
SFC Kevin Watt, trumpet soloist
7. A Peek into a New Time Zone (8:05).....Hank Levy  
SFC Kevin Watt, fluegelhorn soloist; SFC Vince Norman, tenor saxophone soloist;  
SSG Ben Kono, soprano saxophone soloist
8. Alone (6:07).....Hank Levy (*Objective*)  
SSG Dana Rogers, vocal soloist; MSG Greg Pascuzzi, piano soloist;  
SFC Steve Cosper, guitar soloist
9. Passacaglia and Fugue (6:48).....Hank Levy (*Jatap*)  
SGM Eugene Thorne, baritone saxophone soloist;  
MSG Greg Reese, trumpet soloist; MSG Jim McFalls, trombone soloist;  
SFC Vince Norman, piano soloist
10. Chain Reaction (9:21).....Hank Levy (*Objective*)  
MSG Greg Reese, fluegelhorn soloist; SSG Kirk Kadish, piano soloist

# *Personnel*

Colonel Jack H. Grogan, Commander  
Chief Warrant Officer Freddie Vinson, Jr., Director

*Alto Saxophones:* SSG Ben Kono, SFC Darryl Brenzel

*Tenor Saxophones:* SFC Vince Norman, SGM Pat Dillon

*Baritone Saxophone:* SGM Eugene Thorne

*Trumpets:* SSG Jack Wengrosky, SGM John Brye, MSG Rick Aspel,  
MSG Greg Reese\*, SFC Kevin Watt

*Trombones:* MSG Jim McFalls, MSG Lew Chapman, SFC Mike Buckley†

*Bass Trombone:* SFC Homer Ruckle

*Drums and Percussion:* SSG Todd Harrison

*Piano:* MSG Greg Pascuzzi; SSG Kirk Kadish, Piano Soloist (*Chain Reaction*);  
SFC Vince Norman, Piano Soloist (*Passacaglia and Fugue*)

*Guitar:* SFC Steve Cospier

*Bas:* SSG Jeff Lopez

*Vocal Soloist:* SSG Dana Rogers

*Horns (A Time for Love):* SFC Pat Lipphardt, SFC Alan White,  
SSG Jessica Privler, and SSG William Roche

\* Lead trumpet on *Time for a Change* † Lead trombone on *Latintensity*

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# THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD BAND

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## JAZZ AMBASSADORS



### *The Legacy of* HANK LEVY

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*Colonel Jack H. Grogan, Commander*

*Chief Warrant Officer Freddie Vinson, Jr., Director*

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