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## How Jazzerrainious Came To Be

Jazzerrainious is the birth of a thought, dream and concept that took many years in the making. I fell in love with Jazz at a very early age, but I also learned classical which taught me the best parts of a piece are the softer areas that brings out the best of the artist and listener alike. That's when I began my collection and like with life itself, it went through ups and downs throughout the years.

Of course I collect what appealed to me. My tastes grew quickly I guess because of the love I found in music. I soon realized that jazz would be my best escape, my truest friend, my undaunting partner and my biggest expense. Soon I was with my grandmother looking for a saxophone. My grandmother was a passionate super duper black queen and a fire and brimstone from the bows of hell drill sergeant all wrapped into one. Later in life I realized that she was no different than many CEO and investors today. Her interests were always focus. When she noticed my interests, she sat me down and guided me. I soon realized from her guidance that I either produced, or it would be my ass. Taking piano and saxophone lessons were the easy part. I quickly rose through the ranks and soon realized how to express the music I played using stretto, allegretto, adagio, largo, stacco and many other methods. As I matured in the school bands, I took an interest to the stage and jazz band programs. Here you had to know your keys and be able to switch not only based upon the music you read as you played, but for the solos that were always in every piece where no music was written. In these areas, all you saw were a bar and a number indicating how long the solo would be.



The rest was up to the assigned soloist to play with feeling and of course the right keys. This became a challenge due to the fact that like most young

people at that time with hormones, my technique and style was all over the place. I finally went to a high school in the heart of one of the most hard-core and serious cities in the country. Here is where I was baptized, not in the church, but at a level of jazz I had not reached. My deer and head lights episode quickly made me realize that as much as I knew, I knew nothing and it was back to the basic. These kids were professionals and knew it. No wonder, their teacher was one of the best saxophone players in the city. He played for all the greats when they came to town and I knew if I was going to make a mark, I had to get next to him and let some of that knowledge he had overflow on me hopefully.



I practiced day and night, wherever I could. I studied the methods and style and soon was able to take my ranks amongst the band as a third sax rookie. Taking second or even first was not even in my dreams. These guys were straight pros who played their own gigs and they have not even graduated from high school yet. Few understood a true musician. A true musician did not get high or use the money he made to support such a habit (drugs or booze). A true musician got high from the music he heard and played. In other words, for the love of the music.

Of course he wanted to get paid for his work to support himself and those he loved, but his true love was the music. It always was, it will always be.

So there were those whom had habit issues which I call entertainers. No matter how small or big they became, they would always entertain you for the habit. Many so called musicians who made a serious name and contribution to the art of Jazz were just mere entertainers. As good as they sounded whether in a group or playing solo, it was the habit that drove them. Out of the many musicians and singers out there, the true ones would not fill up a clothesbasket. They were like trying to see an alien. You might spot them, you might not. They played with such passion you had to wonder was it for the love of the music, the encouragement of the crowd, or the habit that possessed them. They were not about to tell you. You had to figure that on your own. Good luck in that department. They played their asses off and after getting the roar and cheers of the crowd, they did not go to the after parties. They went to their own area (wherever that may be) for some quite time in deep thought over the accomplishments they had achieved and the planning of what to perform in future concerts and shows in keeping their profession alive and professional as they saw fit. Music consumed them.

### HIRING A MUSICIAN OR BAND

What you think you're paying for:	What you are actually paying for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concert to stand on stage and sing for a couple of hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concert to stand on stage and sing for a couple of hours, plus musician's and crew's meals</li> <li>- Hours of rehearsal time</li> <li>- Rehearsal space</li> <li>- Transport to and from the venue</li> <li>- The amount of money spent on practice and training to become the musician that they are</li> <li>- Insurance for the event</li> <li>- Promotion costs</li> <li>- Website fees</li> <li>- Staff to give to the technical people and others on site used in organizing the gig and setting up.</li> <li>- Manager fees/agent fees</li> </ul>
<p>Not to mention...</p> <p>The promoter also has to cover food, a roof over the musicians' heads, lights, a van, and every other thing you can think of.</p>	
<p><b>Still think charging \$300 for a gig is TOO MUCH?</b></p>	

Whether with family, friends, interviews, traveling, sleeping or even in prayer, the music was always there. They were light a brilliant burning star, with never a dull moment in the minds. Many fail to understand that the life of a performer (musician, athlete, singer etc) is a very hard life and it takes it's toll as well as shed years from your life span. Those who choose this life do so with that understanding and willingness to work at being the best at what ever their goals may be. Few get credit for their accomplishments outside their profession female or male. In most cases the more famous they become, the worst things swagger in their lives. To a point where they will be lucky to get one third from what they make when all the support personnel and fees are done. They go with the program because it is their love and like everyone else, they have love ones to support as well. They end up working just as hard as you and I, if not harder just making a living. My second deer and the headlights was from the forth sax player who was really on baritone. His

solos were awoken and I learned much from him. He told me once that it did not matter what position in the band you were. It is your sound and where your heart is. One night we were doing a gig in Lansing and he arrived looking sick. I first thought that he had the flu or something. I was worried about him and told him so because he had a big solo that night. He said that he would be ok as soon as his girlfriend came with his medicine. I doubted that any medicine could fix this. Little did I realize until he came of the bathroom looking cool as a jewel did it hit me of what that medicine was and how really good it must be. thoughts were all over that map that evening. Soon I made a decision, knowing that the odds were against me, as much as I love the music, I quit being a musician and left the city. I did not know of what path to take, but what ever world I would have a career in, I did not want be involved with the drugs. It did not take me long to realize that drugs had grown everywhere and it would be up tome directly to resist it.



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I kept my horn for a while and settled down doing D.J. local stuff depending where I was. In Europe I was doing well because jazz is hot there. My collection kept growing and I was always doing



personal tapes for others who like jazz as well. Over the years I realized that my collection was vast and it was just a piece of what Jazz really was. I wanted my collection to do more than just sit in the house gathering dust, only to be blown off for guests as a private listen in. Thus Jazzerainious was born. Now the music is shared

with the whole world and I never have to dust the music off as well ([More details on Jazzerainious are here](#)). Jazzerainious is ever growing. We are now on iTunes, Tunein, and Windows Internet Radio as well as a direct link from the Jazzerainious Web site. It challenges us to not only work up good sessions between announcements, but in finding Jazzerainious Specials that you normally do not here over the radio. I will admit the team that works with me has been great. Their ideas have been an outstanding thrust that makes Jazzerainious unique indeed. I hope this paper explains the birth of Jazzerainious. I thank you for your input and messages, and I greatly appreciate your patronage when you listen in.

Thanks Again

# Bill Sommerville