A Conversation with Gary Burton

By Elman + Perez-Trujillo

ary Burton is a jazz vibraphonist, composer, and jazz educator. Burton developed a pianistic style of four-mallet technique as an alternative to the prevailing two-mallet technique. He has been heralded as an innovator and his sound and technique are widely imitated. He is also known for pioneering fusion jazz and popularizing the duet format in jazz, as well as being a major figure in music education due to his 33 years of teaching at the Berklee College of Music, and his many years of service as executive vice president of Berklee.

Gary has recorded over 60 albums and won 7 Grammy Awards. Beginning in the 1960s, when he was still a teenager, Gary has performed with almost every major jazz musician.

Gary wrote a wonderful autobiography titled Learning to Listen: The Jazz Journey of Gary Burton: An Autobiography that was published in 2013, and is available through www.amazon.com. The book won the Best Book of the Year 2014 award from the Jazz Journalists Association.

The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds to 6 minutes. Tap on any video.



INTRODUCTION – 1:02 min.



SEIZE THE MOMENT - 5:20 min.

Where did you grow up? What was your first exposure to music? How did you become passionate about jazz?



WORK HARD - 1:12 min.

According to Malcom Gladwell in his book "Outlier," many people who are great in their fields got a very early start and put in 10,000 hours of practice before others. You seem to fit that description.



INFLUENCE OF CRITICS - 4:09 min.

criticism, and how do they influence you?

What are the primary sources for jazz



CRITICAL THINKING - 3:10 min.

How does music criticism differ from other forms of criticism?



CREATIVITY & FLEXIBILITY 3:18 min.

At what point does the music take over

and tell you what to do, and you wind up surprising yourself?



COLLABORATION – 2:38 min.

Describe the collaborative experience in jazz.



OVERCOMING CHALLENGES - 5:38 min. What kind of risks and challenges have

you overcome over the course of your

career?



-4:34 min. How did you acquire the skills to

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

manage a band?

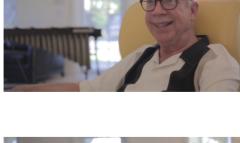
– 1:11 min.

- 0:52 sec.



How did your green new manager become an astute evaluator of talent?

LEARN FROM THE ARTISTS



What do you look for in an agent?

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS



INFLUENTIAL CRITICS - 1:27 min.

Blumenthal and Fernando González?

What's your opinion of critics Bob



EXCELLENT WRITING

– 0:34 sec.

What was it like to write your recent autobiography?