NEWSLETTER

MAY 1999

20

IASJ Newsletter

EDITOR
Walter Turkenburg

COORDINATOR
Rick Heerink

The **IASJ** Newsletter, official bulletin of the International Association of Schools of Jazz, is issued at least three times per year. It is available to all **IASJ** Members.

For information, please contact:

IASJ
J.van Stolberglaan 1
2595 CA The Hague
HOLLAND

tel ..31.70.381.4251
fax ..31.70.385.3941
E-mail iasj@euronet.nl
http://www.euronet.nl/~iasj

From the editor

David Liebman once told a story in one of his lectures about the slow start of jazz education. Up to the early sixties most of the older jazz musicians were not interested in jazz education. Their answers to the question how to play jazz were: "grow up", "be a man", and "live". The old masters did not have a formal jazz training themselves. In some cases they were willing to pass on a little part of their knowledge but in most cases they did not know how to do this. Mystification came instead. Another famous story is the one of how young jazz musicians in Europe learned to play jazz before the early sixties. The only way was to listen to the radio. There were hardly any records around. When a jazz piece was played on the radio the Europeans had to transcribe the melody, the chord changes and the rhythm on the spot. This was before The Real Book became common and long before the play-alongs. Because of these conditions it was only the best musicians who became the first teachers at the jazz institutions in Europe. In the new millennium most of the current teachers will be succeeded by jazz educators who did learn how to play jazz from real books and play-alongs. This new jazz educator will not come from one particular style of jazz but will know all styles. He or she will be a good player and will also be trained to teach other jazz musicians. The danger is that often such jazz teachers are not grown up enough, not man enough and have not lived enough. IASJ Secretary Graham Collier pointed this danger out more than once in Jazz Changes. But time will filter out the good teachers from the bad . This teacher-teachers circle seems to work to a certain extent in classical music but it will not work in jazz . Jazz improvisation and jazz rhythm have changed drastically at least once every decade. Because of this constant change it is unlikely that the teacher-teachers will become the main forces in jazz education. Jazz schools that only have teacher-teachers will not be very attractive to students in the future. These schools will have a hard time to survive. Jazz schools with teachers who are in the midst of an active musical jazz life will keep on attracting students and will survive. On the second day of every Annual IASJ Jazz Meeting a Teachers' Concert takes place. In most cases the player-teachers hardly know each others names, they are jet lagged, have had only one short rehearsal, and have to play original tunes that they have not seen before that moment. Each time it has worked out amazingly well. The CD of the Baltic Jazz Cruise, the 7th Annual IASJ Jazz Meeting held in 1997, makes this very clear. It proves that the teachers who come to the IASJ Jazz Meetings are holding a position as a teacher because they are players in the first place. It also proves that the IASJ has grown up, is a man (woman), and certainly does live!

Walter Turkenburg
Chairman