

A black and white portrait of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark jacket. He is holding a gold saxophone diagonally across his body. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights his face and the instrument. The text 'lew delgatto' is overlaid in blue, and 'PRESS KIT' is overlaid in yellow below it.

lew delgatto

PRESS KIT

short biography

The versatile Lew Del Gatto has been a dynamic figure in the New York music scene for over thirty years. His versatility and knowledgeable comprehension of musical art-form was the basis for a stellar career. He has been involved with jingles, films, jazz and television. He has been a saxophonist with the Saturday Night Live Band from the show's beginning in 1975 to 1979. He continued back on the show from 1985 until 2005. Besides his contributions on bari sax and woodwinds, Lew was also involved as an arranger and contractor on this illustrious show.

A native of New York, Lew's musical abilities were obvious at an early age. Lew's father played the saxophone. The music of Artie Shaw and Benny Goodman was forever in the Del Gatto home. Lew quickly gravitated towards the music of Bird, Prez, Getz and Rollins. During his training at Manhattan School of Music, Lew went on the road with the Les Elgart Band, Sal Salvador and appeared with the world famous Johnny Carson Tonight Show Band. For many years, Lew was busy in the New York studio world with such clients as Coke, Pepsi, Folgers Coffee, Ford and Burger King. He was not only a player in these jingles - he also arranged and composed some of them as well.

Lew has also been busy in the film industry. His credits include: The Blues Brothers, My Blue Heaven, Naked Gun 2 1/2 and others. T.V. show credits include the Grammy Awards, the Emmy Awards, the New Show and Steve Martin's Best Show Ever. He is on numerous recordings for such artists as Tony Bennett, Gladys Knight, Aretha Franklin, John Lennon, Bette Midler, Cal Tjader, the Brecker Brothers, Quincy Jones, Stanley Turrentine, Harry Connick, Jr., Buddy Guy, Mariah Carey...the list goes on and on. He is a featured performer on the "G.E. Smith and the Saturday Night Live Band" CD, Phil Woods Big Band "Celebration", and on George Young's CD, "Old Times".

Lew's live appearances are impressive. He has appeared with many giants in the music world, including Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles, Liza Minelli, Buddy Rich, Tony Bennett, Quincy Jones, Chuck Israel and The National Jazz Ensemble, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Band, Henry Mancini, Herbie Hancock, Phil Woods, Buddy Guy and Eric Clapton, to name a few. Lew has played jazz festivals in Europe as well as locally. He appeared at the Cancun Jazz Festival with his own trio, as well as with George Young and Friends. He performed annually for over a decade at the Delaware Water Gap Festival of the Arts. In the summer of 1998 and 2000 Lew toured Europe with Phil Woods and the Festival Orchestra.

Lew can be heard on his own CDs. "Katewalk", on Naxos which has received rave reviews and made it to number 13 on the Gavin charts, featuring Victor Lewis, Steve Turre, Randy Brecker, Chip Jackson, Joe Cohn and Ron Feuer. "You and the Night and the Music", is a romantic jazz CD recorded with Ron Feuer. "Heroes Vol I" is one of his latest CDs which is an homage encompassing music of many of the saxophonists he has been inspired by through the years. "To Al & Zoot...with Love" is just that and is the newest CD performed with his buddy of many years, Bob Keller and Tom Whaley, Tony Marino and Jesse Green all from the Gap area. All of Lew's musical roads have paved the way for what is yet to come - his total devotion to jazz. Lew has always been intricately entwined in the music world in various mediums but his first love is jazz... that is what he plays at every possible moment and where his best instrumental voice can be heard.

extended biography

The early years. Lew was born to Joseph & Marie Del Gatto in Brooklyn, NY on March 27, 1941. His father was a commercial artist who enjoyed music. Joe played sax in a local band. Lew's mother loved to listen to music. There was always music in the Del Gatto home. Artie Shaw, Count Basie, Woody Herman, Sinatra and Benny Goodman were constantly played in the house when Lew was a kid. Lew's musical abilities were obvious at an early age. He was given his first saxophone lesson by his father when he was in the 7th grade. In high school, Lew studied with Sid Cooper who, at the time, was an NBC staff musician and who had played lead alto with many big bands including the great Tommy Dorsey. Lew found Sid to be a great mentor. Lew's main interest was jazz and he quickly gravitated towards the music of Bird, Prez, Getz and Rollins. After high school, Lew went on to study at Manhattan School of Music. He majored in clarinet with Leon Russkianoff and Harold Sachs. There wasn't any such thing as a saxophone major at MSM in 1959. He studied flute with Harold Bennett and oboe with Harold Feldman, Al Goltzer and Harry Shulman. Following his formal training, Lew went on the road with the Les Elgart Band and Sal Salvador. Then he appeared with the world famous Johnny Carson Tonight Show Band.

Growing up in the vibrant New York music scene, Lew found his way between work and his passion. He played in many rehearsal bands throughout the years such as Ron Aprea's Basie-type band, Joel Kaye's NY Neophonic Orchestra (Stan Kenton type band), Chubby Jackson's Big band, Lynn Welshman's Tentet and Rick Wald's big band.

Lew's first professional gig was with Skitch Henderson at the Waldorf at the age of nineteen. Sid Cooper recommended Lew for the gig. That lasted for about six weeks. Other doors opened from there. He also played with the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra, Doc Severinson's small band and his big band, Clark Terry Big Band, Mel Lewis and Thad Jones, and Chuck Israel and The National Jazz Ensemble. He also played with Buddy Rich which lead to playing an extended gig with that band at the famous Sand's Hotel in Vegas with Frank Sinatra. This was the first of three tours with Frank Sinatra. The second two in the seventies were with a New York studio orchestra contracted by Joe Malin.

In the mid-seventies, Lew was working with Paul Simon. At that time, a new TV show was starting up. It was television in uncharted waters. The show was Lorne Michaels' "Saturday Night Live". Lew left Paul Simon and joined "Saturday Night Live". He was with the Saturday Night Live Band for two runs. The first was from the show's beginning in 1975 to 1979. During this time, Lew continued to study jazz. While on SNL his instrument was the baritone sax. Tenor was his instrument of choice in jazz. He worked with Jack Reilly studying harmony and theory. He continued back on the show from 1985 until 2005. In the 90's, he kept honing his passion and studied with the great George Coleman while continuing on the show. In 2005, Lew decided to leave the show to find his place in jazz. Besides his contributions on bari sax and woodwinds, Lew was also involved as an arranger and contractor on this illustrious show. The show was a great run for that period in his life.

Lew has been a dynamic figure in the New York music scene for over thirty years. His versatility and knowledgeable comprehension of musical art-form was the basis for a stellar career. He has been involved with jingles, films, Broadway, television and jazz. Lew was busy in the New York studio world with such clients as Coke, Pepsi, Folgers Coffee,

Ford, Burger King and hundreds of others. He was not only a player in these jingles - he also arranged and composed many of them as well.

Lew has also been busy in the film industry. His credits include: *My Blue Heaven*, *Naked Gun 2 ½*, *the Wiz*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Man on the Moon*, *The Original Blues Brothers* movie (Lew played all of the baritone sax solos on this film.), and others.

On Broadway, Lew played *Guys & Dolls*, *Apple Tree*, *Mame*, *Promises Promises*, *West Side Story*, *Pearlie*, *A Little Night Music*, *Irene* and *Follies*.

T.V. show credits include the 1992 Grammy Awards with Mariah Carey, the 1988 Emmy Awards, the New Show and Steve Martin's Best Show Ever, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, MTV Unplugged Mariah Carey, David Letterman Show, Rosie O'Donnell Show, Shirley McLaine "Gypsy in My Soul", Bette Midler "Mondo Beyondo", and others.

He is on numerous recordings for such artists as Tony Bennett, Gladys Knight, Aretha Franklin, John Lennon, Bette Midler, Cal Tjader, the Brecker Brothers, Quincy Jones, Stanley Turrentine, Harry Connick, Jr., Buddy Guy, Paul Simon, Billy Joel, Average White Band, Liza Minelli, Ringo Starr, Lou Rawls, Chaka Chan, Frieda Payne, Steve Winwood, Aerosmith, Madonna, King Creole and the Coconuts, Tina Turner, Steely Dan, Luther Vandross, Levon Helm, Carly Simon, Mariah Carey...the list goes on and on. He is a featured performer on the "G.E. Smith and the Saturday Night Live Band" CD, Phil Woods Big Band "Celebration", and on George Young's CD, "Old Times".

Lew's live appearances are impressive. He has appeared with many giants in the music world, including Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles, Liza Minelli, Buddy Rich, Tony Bennett, Quincy Jones, Chuck Israel and The National Jazz Ensemble, Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Band, Henry Mancini, Herbie Hancock, Phil Woods, Buddy Guy and Eric Clapton, to name a few. Lew has played jazz festivals in Europe as well as locally. He appeared at the Cancun Jazz Festival with his own trio, as well as with George Young and Friends. He performed annually for over a decade at the Delaware Water Gap Festival of the Arts. In the summer of 1998 and 2000 Lew toured Europe with Phil Woods and the Festival Orchestra.

Lew always wanted to produce his own jazz CD as an artist. In 1997, he had the opportunity to do so and the result of that is "Katewalk" which was released on Naxos. "Katewalk" has received rave reviews and made it to number 13 on the Gavin charts, featuring Victor Lewis, Steve Turre, Randy Brecker, Chip Jackson, Joe Cohn and Ron Feuer. His next CD, "You and the Night and the Music", is a romantic jazz CD recorded with Ron Feuer on piano. "Heroes Vol I" is one of his latest releases on Lew's label, 220 Music Corp. This CD came about because Lew wanted to pay homage to some of his favorite saxophonists/composers who had inspired him through the years. For this CD, Lew is joined by his rhythm section heroes, Bob Cranshaw, Don Friedman & Mickey Roker with special guest artist, the beloved Frank Wess! "To Al & Zoot...with Love" is just that and is the newest CD performed with his buddy of many years, Bob Keller along with a rhythm section consisting of Tom Whaley, Tony Marino and Jesse Green all from the Gap area.

All of Lew's musical roads have paved the way for what is yet to come – his total devotion to jazz. Lew has always been intricately entwined in the music world in various mediums but his first love is jazz... that is what he plays at every possible moment and where his best instrumental voice can be heard.

sessions and live performance

Michael Franks

Chaka Khan

Mariah Carey

George Benson

Bette Midler

Pugh Taylor

Cal Tjader

Millie Jackson

Jon Lucien

Johnny Winter

Yoko Ono

Jon Lucien

The Blues Brothers

Herbie Mann

Lonnie Smith

The Brecker Brothers Band

The Manhattan Transfer

John Tropea

O'Donel Levy

David Matthews

J. Geils Band

Jimmy McGriff

Andy Pratt

Tuff Darts

The Average White Band

Brooklyn Dreams

Louis Bellson

Luiz Bonfá

George Young

Laurie Anderson

G.E. Smith & The SNL Band

Ray Simpson

David Byrne

Billy Joel

Carol Douglas

Manhattan Jazz

Buddy Guy

Phil Woods

Rupert Holmes

Stan Kenton

Rick Wald

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