

Friday, May 18, 2007

Max Cole leaves the planet.

Dizzy Gillespie continues making my jaw drop. (Photo from Library of Congress's website). By the age of twelve, I was into jazz music with a fury. While most of my peers were listening to Aerosmith, Zep-lite, and Peter Frampton and sometimes giving me strange looks for my jazz fanaticism, I was mesmerized by, and ultimately experienced in live performance, Diz, Chick, McCoy, and dozens more. I played the trumpet for ten years uninterrupted, and ultimately learned to play jazz improvisation. The experience has served me well as a trial lawyer, helping make me more comfortable performing live, thinking and improvising quickly on my feet, and finding creative ways to persuade. When I first started listening to jazz radio on the public and commercial airwaves, I got the only available steady stream of jazz throughout the day and night from New York City's WRVR 106.7 FM, whose history is here of eventually getting changed overnight to a country music format a few years later to earn higher profits for its owners. A brief background of WRVR announcer great Les Davis is here. Here is an online station that focuses on replicating WRVR's music format. Still on the lineup when I started listening to WRVR was announcer Max Cole, who played unadulterated great jazz, and spoke more like he was from a friendly Midwest town than from the rough-and-tumble New York. I just learned that he passed away last July at 91. He influenced me very much during his short time that remained on WRVR when I started listening. The least I can give back is to sing Max's praises here, and to give him a final thanks for helping to add an indispensable dimension to my life. Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Jon's news & views at 00:00