



Funding for the Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program NEA Jazz Master interview was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

JAMES MOODY
NEA Jazz Master (1998)

Interviewee: James Moody (March 26, 1925 – December 9, 2010)
Interviewer: Lida Baker
Date: August 19-20, 1993
Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution
Description: Transcript, 121 pp.

Baker: Okay, let's just start from the beginning. You were born in Savannah, Georgia, right?

Moody: Right. 1925. March 26th. Uh-huh. [Affirmative]

Baker: Tell me a little about your family. About your parents?

Moody: My -- I knew my mother, Lida [phonetic sp.], but -- but I didn't meet my father till I was 21 years old.

Baker: Really?

Moody: Worked at -- with Gillespie. I was in -- I was with the band and we came to Indianapolis, nap time.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: And this gentleman came up to the bus and asked me if my mother's name was Ruby Moody [phonetic sp.] and if my grandfather's name was James Hamm [phonetic sp.] and my grandmother's name was Maddie Hamm [phonetic sp.], and I told him, "Yeah." Everything was

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affirmative and he said, "Well, I'm your father." You know. [indiscernible] I said, "Well, what know, pop?"

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know, 'cause I didn't feel anything when he said he was my father, but, "Well, glad to see you." You know, so that's what that was.

Baker: Wow!

Moody: And I thought that he played trumpet. And they tell me that he played with Connie Bradshaw [phonetic sp.] off and on or something.

But I thought I got my music -- to like music -- from my father, but I got it from my mother because she the one that had the Chick Webb records, and Jimmie Lunceford, Count Basie, you know, the records of that time because she liked jazz, you know. So I really got my musical likes from my mother, I think. And my mother played piano at -- in the church, so -- because we -- I was born in Savannah, Georgia, but I was raised in Reading, Pennsylvania and Newark.

Baker: And when did you move from Georgia to Pennsylvania?

Moody: When I was --

Baker: About how old were you?

Moody: I don't know. I mean, 6, 7 months, something, I guess.

Baker: Oh, you were still just a baby then.

Moody: Oh, yeah! Yeah. And we were living in Reading, Pennsylvania when my mother was pregnant and -- and, you see, we weren't living in Savannah, Georgia.

Baker: Oh!

Moody: My mother became pregnant and then she went down to Savannah -- I -- I think, looking for my father, you know. And I was born. And then after she recuperated a little bit, she came back to Reading, Pennsylvania and that -- you know, that's where she was raising me. And then it was in Reading, Pennsylvania where my mother -- they put me in a school for retarded children and the reason for that, they didn't know -- I guess they didn't tell, either -- was I was hard of hearing. And they thought I was -- that's why I have this lisp when you hear me because I don't hear s's. So they put me in a school for retarded children. And my mother knew that I was okay.

Baker: Right!

Moody: You know, in those days, it was the same thing. You know what I'm saying? So -- and

we'll get around to that and when I was in the Air Force. And so my mother, she -- we moved to Newark. When she moved to Newark, she went to this -- the teacher at Newton Street School [phonetic sp.] and told her what, you know, what my predicament was. So the teacher -- they had Moody and I was always in the back because of M, you know, they put by alphabet. And every time the teacher would ask me something, "Huh?" 'cause I couldn't hear. So the teacher moved me up front, in Newton Street School, I skipped a couple of grades and I was doing fine.

And one day, the doctor and nurse came by looking in your ears, you know how they look? And they looked in my ears and they said, "Your kid going to go deaf. So they have to go to the deaf school." So I went to Blue Street School for the Deaf [phonetic sp.] in Newark, which is no longer there now; it's a Shell, and I graduated from there and then went to Art High School [phonetic sp.]. You know.

But. And then when -- when -- when the war broke -- broke out, they -- I mean, like, I had this thing with my ear, but they said, "You're warm so you're in." [laughter]

Baker: So how old were you when you moved from Reading, Pennsylvania to Newark?

Moody: I guess must've been around maybe 6 or 7, something like that, maybe. Yeah. I guess. Yeah. 8. Yeah, something like that.

Baker: And you grew up hearing music in your home, then, with your mother playing the piano at the church and having these recordings?

Moody: Well, like the -- the record that she had. Especially when I was in my teens, because my uncle, my Uncle Louie worked for -- for the relief people. You know, the -- the -- I forget what you call them, but you know, on relief. You know, the relief people, the relief worker. So -- let's see now. Why am I saying that? The relief worker. Oh! So they -- they build these new housing projects and he had some pull, so he got us in this new housing project which was called Pennington Court [phonetic sp.]. Brand new. It only had three floors, and it was really nice, boy, to go down there like, you know, you had your own bedroom and you had a bath with hot water, you know, running water. Well, it was really nice.

And so my mother had these records because as soon as you walked in the door, here was this phonograph that we had, you know, Jimmy -- I'd come, boy, and it would be playing. And I'm so glad that she liked that type of music because -- I tell people that there's certain things I didn't like. I didn't like gospel music and I didn't like the doo-wop groups, you know. And -- and -- and I was wondering, like, in all my -- like I was kind of an outcast, known as a five o'clock drag because I didn't like that, you know. And now, when I look back, I know why I didn't like it. Because, you see, Lida, something might be soulful and it might be -- how can you say? -- if not learned, but it's something that's felt by people. Now, that's wonderful! But if you feel something else, like I must've -- I must've known a little more because of my mother playing those records, you know, those -- those -- those records, we called them records because that's what they were then, just a record. And because of her playing that, my ear must've been trained a little bit to hear other harmony, other than hearing people sing searching for something because that -- that's what those group was. [scatting] you know? And then a person singing [scatting]

that's okay. But I mean, it just didn't -- it wasn't my cup of tea or coffee, or.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. I just didn't like it.

Now, I've heard Take Six [phonetic sp.], I love gospel music! That time -- kind, you see, because for me, it's okay to be crude, but crudeness can only last for so long. After a little while, you gotta get a little better. If you keep on with the same thing, I'm sorry. How can you expect a person to say, "I'm born" and you stay a baby? No one stays the same. So how come the music has to stay the same? Or how come concepts have to stay the same. See? Because everybody changes, you see? And the -- the -- the bad thing about it, or the good thing about it, whichever way you wanna look at it, is how they change. Do you change for the better or do you change for the worse? And you know what that winds up being? Or winds up being your environment, you see. 'Cause if you've got a -- an environment that -- that's -- that's not too fulfilling from the standpoint of giving you knowledge no matter what it might be in, then, I mean, you're going to, like, anything that you're doing is going to be diminished, you see. So, like the thing I was saying yesterday, birds of a feather flock together.

And what you have to do is try to be with something that's always for the betterment of you, you know. And the betterment would be be around people that know things such as people that speak languages or if you're interested in music or -- be around people who really know some music and how do you do that? By inquire -- inquire about it -- for someone.

You see, when I came up, I didn't know, I wanted to learn music and I went to Art High School in Newark, New Jersey; I said, "I want to learn music." I got a big red F in music mainly because I knew nothing about music at all and they started me on sol feg you see? And sol feg is, you know just in case someone else knows, is when you look at the notes written on the paper and you sing it. I mean, in relationship to whatever it is that -- that being played or sung, you sing at. Okay. Well, if I don't know anything about music, how am I gonna do that?

So no one -- and in those days, people were kind of haphazard about -- they didn't give a damn. If you didn't want to learn, they figured, well, "We're not concerned; just get the paycheck."

Baker: Sure.

Moody: That's the way the teachers were so I didn't learn English, I didn't learn Math; I didn't learn anything at school, really. You know. My mother is -- is -- is -- is my strong focal point for me. She told me things and -- and God bless my mother for her going to a school called Mallah [phonetic sp.] down South.

Baker: Is that a college, or?

Moody: It's -- it's a sort of a girls' school, yeah. By her going to this college and if I said, "I ain't going," my mother [indiscernible], I said, "Excuse me, mother, and I'm not going." I'm lucky that my mother knew English and whatnot, and I'm lucky that my uncle moved to Europe and

lived there. And I'm lucky now that I have some of the get up and go from my mother to know, hey, I didn't go to school, but they've got -- they've got plenty of books out, so I've got books on everything. Well, a lot of things. I'll put it that way. You know, and if I don't know something, find out a little bit about, they got a book there, you know. Know.

Baker: When did you realize you were first interested in music?

Moody: As long as I could remember, Lida, I -- my mother said when I was a kid, the washing machine was going a wooka, a wooka, a wooka and I would be in a diaper and I would, like, just dance with it. I guess that was the rhythm. It wasn't music, but it was the rhythm --

Baker: Sure!

Moody: -- and I guess maybe from there, I guess that's 'bout it. And then I saw a saxophone, you know, when we were living in Newark. I saw it in the window of Don Kirschner Music Store [phonetic sp.] on Springfield Avenue.

Baker: And about how old were you then do you think?

Moody: Oh, 9, 10, oh, man, but I didn't get a horn until I was 16. You know.

Baker: But when you saw that saxophone in the window --

Moody: Oh, man --

Baker: -- what did you think?

Moody: -- oh, I thought it was the most beautiful thing that I'd ever seen, just, oh, man! I'd just go and look at it every day. Go to look at -- but they had a whole window full of saxophones. I'd just go and look at 'em, you know. It wonderful.

Baker: Did you kind of pick one out that you thought you might like to have just -- just?

Moody: No, no, no. I just looked -- I looked -- the tenor, man, I -- you know, and what happened was when -- when I'd finally gotten one, it was old beat up alto. Silver.

Baker: And how did you get it?

Moody: I think my unc -- my Uncle Louie got it for me -- Uncle Louie and my Uncle Jake was kind of contributor a little bit to it, too.

Baker: And these were your mother's brothers?

Moody: Uncle Louie was my mother's brother and Uncle Jake was my father's brother. Yeah. But that -- that -- and that night, when I put that horn in the bed, man, I just slept with it, you know. That was really something. Good feeling, man.

And then there was a guy by the name of Howell Epps [phonetic sp.] and he showed me how to play the scale, [scatting] you know. I played that.

And then, like, a couple years later, I was drafted in the Air Force. All right? And.

Baker: Oh, let me just ask you about --

Moody: Okay. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: Howell Epps. Was he somebody you were in school with or a teacher?

Moody: No. He was just a guy that had a saxophone, too. He had one and he had one longer than me.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Like he didn't play. I haven't heard of Howell Epps since then.

Baker: And he was somebody you knew in high school?

Moody: In Newark. No --

Baker: No? It -- .

Moody: -- no. It was just in Newark. We didn't go to the same school. You see, if I was walking down the street anywhere and I heard a saxophone playing out a window, I'd go knock on the door. I mean, in those days, it was funny. People did things like that, you know. But Howell Epps was just a guy that lived in the neighborhood and he had a saxophone. You know, and so.

Baker: And he showed you, kind of, the.

Moody: Yes, he showed me that, it was just C scale. Now, I know what it was, you know. [laughs] 'Cause I never will forget someone looked at me says, "What are these for?" I said, "I don't know. I don't use those." [laughter]

Baker: Those were some of the keys --

Moody: Yes.

Baker: -- on the saxophone? [laughter]

Moody: Yeah. That was very funny, you know.

Baker: So you didn't really have the opportunity to have formal musical training when you were

growing up?

Moody: No. No. So, later on, then.

Baker: Did you pretty much -- well, did you play in the high school band or something like that?

Moody: Yeah. Yeah, then they had the music, I played the whatever it was. I sat there and played by ear. [scatting] Couldn't read worth a damn. I did not -- didn't know, you know. Because I didn't have the lessons, you know. I would go to take a saxophone lesson, cost 25 for a lesson and the guy, we would -- he would be on the second floor and he would be looking out the window. And I knew what he was looking at. You know how the -- the women would drive by and their skirt would be up just a little higher. He'd be doing that from the window and I'd play anything. [scatting] said, "Fine. Okay. Come back next week."

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: And that's the truth. You know. So, you know. And they had one of these big store fronts, you know, upstairs. For less than 25 cents, you know. And, so. That's about the extent of my learning.

Baker: So pretty much even though you were in the band and you were playing written music, you were doing it mostly by ear.

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. I wouldn't, like I'd look [scatting]. You know how -- one day, my grandmother had a hymn book, and I was looking at it and something happened. I don't know, like I looked and I thought it looked like it missing key, and like that. You know? And then when I was drafted in the Air Force, they -- like -- they said, "Does anyone have a horn? Who -- who got a horn?" I says, "I have." They didn't say, "Did you play it?"

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: They said, yeah, I said, "I have." They said, "Send for it." And I sent for the horn because they said, "We want to form a -- a band, you know, a -- a band." 'Cause I was stationed in Greensboro, North Carolina and it was segregated. Three-quarters of the base was Caucasian, and the other, one-quarter, was Negro. So they -- they had the regular Air Force band, but they wanted to have a so-called Negro Air Force band, you know. So that's how that came about.

Baker: Were you drafted right out of high school? Did you get a chance to finish school? Did you go straight to the war?

Moody: I got drafted right out of high school and they gave me a diploma because I was flown in to graduate. I got the diploma, but it didn't make any difference. They didn't teach me any Math or anything [indiscernible].

Baker: So you must've been really young when you went into the Air Force. You.

Moody: I was 18. Yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative] 18 years old and -- but, you know, when I look back, the Lord was working things out for me, you know, because I got -- went down there and this was the thing I was telling you. I was from Newark, New Jersey, supposedly to be up North. When we went down, we went down in a train and it was, like, very dark the day we left. We didn't know where we were going, you know, and my mother and my sister came to see me off at the station in Newark, Penn Station. And we traveled all night, and the next day, we were finally BTC Number 10, Basic Tra -- Basic Training Center Number 10 in Greensboro, North Carolina. That was down South.

So one of the things that I -- that really sticks out was that the Germans -- they had German prisoners of war there. You know. And they would jump off the truck and they could eat. And the rest are -- you know, they'd get something to eat and I couldn't go in there. And this is in Greensboro, North Carolina. You know. So. And -- and I used to say, "I wonder why they?" You know. And -- and, like, I had a little complex, saying, "I wonder why people hate me? What have I done?" You know.

But now, and you know, like, later on, I says, "I know why. Ignorance is ignorance." And I'd say, "Well, I know what the minority is and I know what the majority is." Like I said before, the minority is intelligence and the majority is ignorance. And that's what it is. Like on the TV thing we saw this morning about you talking about well of another race. What other race? There's only one race, the human race; there's no different races, you know. Now, you can't have a baby with a dog or a horse or a rat --

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: -- but a woman can have another child with a man, okay. So. That's about the size of that. Ignorance. You know.

Baker: Was it a shock for you going from the North to the South.

Moody: No, it wasn't a shock mainly because the Newark, New Jersey, like when we would go to the movies? Newark was 9 miles from New York, we would have to sit in the balcony and the Caucasians would sit on the first floor. That's just the way it was. When we'd go to Chinese restaurant, we'd sit on one side and the Caucasians on one end. And I never will forget one time I -- I was with Dizzy's band then -- and I came and the rest of them -- I just sat on the other side. I says, "I'm eating here. That's it." You know. Nobody said anything, but now I'm wondering if they spit in my rice. [laughs]

Baker: Ooh....

Moody: I'm just wondering now. But I remembered one. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: And the school system that you came up through in Pennsylvania and in New Jersey, those were all segregated schools at that time?

Moody: No, the schools in Newark, they weren't segregated.

Baker: Oh, they weren't?

Moody: No! No. The schools weren't. Only the movies. And some of the restaurants downtown. You know. Like, you know, like it was just Caucasian restaurant, that's it, you know.

Baker: But you went to an integrated high school.

Moody: Yeah. Hell, yeah. Grammar school, everything! Supposedly the North.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know, that -- that -- that warmed over BS where you think, oh, yeah, we're all the same. And it's a crock of crap. You know. That's the same way now. When people say, "They," you know 'cause I'm a they or them, "they have the same opportunities we have," which is bull crap. No, we don't. You know. So. But the point is is I don't make a big thing over that, but I gotta do, I've got to rise above it. You know. And I think, like, I know that I'm no better than anyone in the world, but I also know that no one else in this world is better than me. Because of my mother. Because I love myself. And my mother, like, I've always liked myself even though I was saying, "Well, I wonder why they hate me so much?" You know.

So my -- my mother, she taught me love yourself, you know, and she taught me to love people for what they are, you know. And that's the way I am. And that's another thing wrong with most people; most people don't love themselves and I can't blame a lot of 'em because of the things that they do. You know. How can you F, I mean, mess over people, you know, and then think that it's the right thing to do. Or how can you hate someone because someone told you something about them. You could tell me something about someone all you wanted to and I would say, "Oh, okay." I'm not gonna hate them, but like, if I had any dealings with them, that would be in my mind in the back, but then I'd have to form my own opinion after how that person was. You know. So.

Anyway, getting back to the other thing. I love myself for what people say about, you know, me stinking or me not being intelligent enough to fly an airplane or do this or do that. That's a crock of crap and I know it [indiscernible] else.

Baker: Was your family supportive when you showed an interest in music --

Moody: Oh, of course.

Baker: -- and desire for being able to.

Moody: Of course, yeah. My mother -- yeah. Because that's what I wanted to do. And I think it -- I think any family. You know what I think is wrong is for a person to say, "I want you to make some money, so I want you to be a doctor." You know, no. The kid wants to be a doctor,

the kid should say, "Well, I want to be a doctor because I want to help people." But that's not, like -- people don't do anything now because they want to do it. They do it because they want to make money. Do you know that I wanted to be a musician? I had no thoughts or anything about making money. I didn't dawn on me. I didn't realize that I was poor. I didn't realize that I had nothing. You know. Because what little we had seemed like a lot to me, and I had plenty of love from my mother and my grandmother, you know. So -- so my not having anything like -- I forgot what that point, there was a point I wanted to make. What was my point I was trying to make? What was the question again?

Baker: Well, we were talking about, you know, your -- when your family is supportive of your desire to be a musician.

Moody: Oh, yeah, right, my mother. So my mother, they were supportive of me. I mean, I had no problem with that whatsoever. Oh. Now. But you see, people nowadays, they're not really doing what they wanna do. First of all, music is supposed to be music, not music. I'm gonna say that again. Music is supposed to be music, not music. Okay, now, what I mean by that is is that, like, you have lots of things that supposed to be music, you know, well, first of all, to me, music is rhythm, melody, and harmony. That's music. Melody alone isn't music; harmony alone isn't music; and rhythm alone isn't music. Okay?

So, like, it seems like America's a land of mediocrity. Okay? It seems like if you take -- the more BS there is put into something, the more the American public goes for it. You know? They don't know too much about quality. Now, the difference between a European audience, even an Asian audience, they seem to sense that there's something to something that has quality to it.

And they -- they seem to -- to appreciate the arts more than American, mainly because Americans have had too much of everything and they just border on the mediocre stuff. You know, like, everything they do is wrong. You know. I know that's a hell of a statement to make, but it is. Americans, everything they do is wrong. They eat wrong, they live wrong, and they think wrong. Okay? Now, would you like to ask me what are some questions on that just so that I can maybe explain what I'm saying?

Baker: Yeah. I think, actually, what we'll do is get into that when we talk about the response of European, American, and Asian audiences to your music and also the fact that you've lived abroad and you have a different perspective on how the music is accepted abroad and how African-American musicians are accepted abroad and the whole different psyche that you're dealing with living outside this country as an artist in an art form that isn't necessarily appreciated to the degree that we would hope that it would be in this country. And we can get to that when we get to when you're living in Europe, a little bit later on.

But you started to talk a little bit about your experiences in the Air Force, which I know you had some -- some -- yes. Well, let's go to the Air Force now because I know you had some incredible experiences musically and personally in the time you were in the Air Force. I'm just amazed that also, like you said, with your hearing problem, that they didn't find that difficulty when they decided to draft you.

Moody: Well, they did, I think, to a lot of people because at the time, they needed every -- every -- every person they could get, I guess.

Baker: And that was --

Moody: So.

Baker: -- what year? That was -- that was what year?

Moody: 1943.

Baker: '43.

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah. So I went in 1943 and came out 1946, discharged. But, you know, it was different being -- just different being down South because there was a different mentality down there. Not only -- not only with so called Caucasians, but with the Negroes, too. It just did -- people thought differently, you know. There was a subservient attitude seen, you know. And I used to -- I used to be amazed, said, "Damn! I wonder why," you know, I'm looking at people and I'm saying, "Why are they supposed to be better?" And I'm looking and I'm say, "You know, they don't smell funky, you know, they're not good looking. I mean, they're just like other people. Some are, some aren't. Depending on who's asking, just like anybody else. What's so special?" You know. So. Then, the more you think you say, "Well, what's special? Who's in power in the law?" You know, that's what it was. So it all boiled down to the government. You know. So.

When I -- when I was discharged, but before I was discharged, while we were there, they built a big, like a tent, and it was called the Big Top. And in this Big Top, they would have entertainment for the soldiers. And we -- that's where I met Dizzy Gillespie when he came in with his band. And we used to hear his record, you know, he and Charlie Parker, boy, they'd saw peanuts, oh, man! Because after I heard that, before -- my -- my idol was Jimmy Dorsey. And then Charlie Barnett [phonetic sp.] then George Yald [phonetic sp.] then Ben [indiscernible], you know, like that, Buddy Tate [phonetic sp.]. After I heard Dizzy and Charlie Parker, I said, "That's it. That's it, boy." You know.

So I met Dizzy and Diz said to me and Dave Burns, well, he says, "When I get back to New York, I'm going to form another band," he said, "and -- and you told me you're gonna be discharged, so come and try out for it." So that's what we did when we were discharged -- I was discharged in 1946 and Dave was, too, you know. And Dave Burns, trumpet.

So I went back to Newark with my mother and I started playing around Newark, place called -- place called Lloyd's Manor [phonetic sp.]. \$7 a night. Boy, that was big money then.

Baker: Sure!

Moody: Sugar was what, 10 cents a pound? You know what I mean?

Baker: Let's fill in a blank real quickly. When you went into the Air Force and they asked you if you had an instrument and you sent for your instrument, then was that when you had the first opportunity to have some real training in music --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- 'cause something must've happened between that time --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- and the time Dizzy heard you and said he wanted you to work with him.

Moody: Yeah, because what they did was -- what they did was they had -- the Air Force band, the authorized Air Force band, they had the people, the trumpet player, the saxophone, come over and give us lessons, see? So that's how we -- you know, like, we started learning. We had a band.

Baker: And what kinds of things did you play in that band? This was the Negro Air Force Band --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- on the Greensboro base?

Moody: Greensboro, North Carolina, yeah.

Then they changed the name to ORD Number 10. 'Cause overseas, we'd play at Depot Number 10 before it was Basic Training Center Number 10. Okay?

Then what it was is we had a guy by the name of Pop Reeves [phonetic sp.], Chuck -- Chuck Anderson [phonetic sp.], and Dave Burns, that some people -- and Clinton Garner [phonetic sp.], L. Garner's [phonetic sp.] brother. And they wrote some arrangements, and then we had some stocks. [indiscernible] stocks, you know. And do you know that about a year later that the -- the -- the -- the authorized Air Force band used to come over to hear us? They would come over then, you know, and I just saw one of the guys in St. Louis when I played there that was showing me, like, showing me things, said, "Moody, it's good to see you again." Man, we just laughed about those days, you know. But that's the way it was.

Do you know that they had, like, an Officer's Club and the Negro officers they -- they -- they didn't want them and they can't go in the club, either? They had little problems, you know, in the town because, like, you an officer, but only over Negroes or something, you know. So they changed all that now. I think Truman had something to do with that.

Baker: Could you go into town and?

Moody: Oh, yeah, could go into town, but go in the town, but you go in the Negro section of town. And, Lida, I'm telling you, it was so stupid, you know, when you stop and think about it, like here I am, I'm in the Air Force, I'm supposed to be an American soldier, right? And there's a prisoner of war and he had more rights in the town than I did. You know. Mainly because he's German.

Baker: Right.

Moody: He's a Caucasian. So that shows you, you know, stupidity, you know.

Baker: Did you spend the whole time from '43 --

Moody: Three years.

Baker: '43 to '46 in Greensboro, the whole?

Moody: Three years, I was there, yes, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Yep. Yep. And.

Baker: And your main duty then was to play in the band?

Moody: Yeah, I was in the band. Yes, though we would play, like, we would get up and play reville, you know. We would play for parades. We would play for, like, if people got sick for the wrong thing. Like, I have to say this.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Like, like they had venereal disease, right? For a person got a venereal disease, we would have to go and stand in front of his barrack and play the funeral march. You know. I mean, to embarrass him. That -- that's what they had us do.

And then I never will forget the German prisoners of war was doing KP for everybody so -- so the colonel of the base, he ga -- had a meeting. And -- and -- and he said, "We don't want them to do KP for us. We'll do our own KP." So, I mean, he was -- had a sort of a fireside chat thing where you could talk, so I raised my hand. I said, "Sir." I said, "I -- I'd like them to do KP for me." I says, "I don't wanna do it, you know." I said, "You said, you know, you're saying we don't want 'em, but I do! I want 'em to do it for me." You know. And -- and I'm standing up and letting him go -- got me by my coat, he pulling me like this, you know. I'm 18. You know. So he's trying to get me. I said, "Wait a minute." I said, "No, sir." He said, "Soldier, what's your name?" I said, "P.F.C. James Moody, sir." He says, "General So-and-so likes it. President Roosevelt likes it." He said, "And I like and I don't give a goddamn whether you like it or not, now sit down." And I said, "But sir, you says," go on and pulling on me to sit down. So I sat down, you know. And he say. You know what I mean? So that's what that was. Well.

Baker: So you also played as well as the parades and ceremonial kinds of things and everything. Did you play at dances and various things?

Moody: Oh, we played dances, yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah, but they all -- all -- always. Did we ever play? I think we did, yeah. We even played some of the Caucasian dances, too. But -- but we played mostly, you know, over there under the Big Top. You know, that they called it. You know. And, like, it got so that the band -- as a matter of fact, Lou Donaldson [phonetic sp.], that's where I met Lou Donaldson, down there. Lou Donaldson and -- because he was -- he was, I think he was in A&T College, you know. But I met.

Baker: That was North Carolina --

Moody: Greensboro, North Carolina.

Baker: -- Greensboro, North Carolina, A&T?

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: Isn't that something?

Moody: Yeah.

But you know, you really look back and a lot of feelings that I had of inferiority, or being inferior, came from the ignorance on the part of the government and the people, and -- but the thing that got me out of that was traveling with Dizzy. I got with Dizzy and I would travel places and I'd see things, say, "Wait a minute! This isn't what was said to me," or, "This isn't the way that was." I just, you know. Because I don't -- I never did believe that everyone felt that way. Because I would be doing certain things and, you know, like I could just feel certain things from people. And, wow, you know. But some people, they figure, "Oh, yes. A girl was raped. Uh-oh! They raped her!" You know. They. So now, if a girl gets raped, I'm implicated in it. Why? I don't -- I don't feel anything about her anymore, not like that. But I hate to say, because as soon as someone would say certain someone was murdered or raped or something, I think, was it a Negro guy? No. Whew! Because it -- because I know immediately, I've got something to do with it, which is stupid, you know?

Baker: When you were talking about the Big Top, did you get to see a lot of different groups that came through as a part of that as well as Dizzy's band?

Moody: No, the group that I saw most of all was like Dizzy. That was the one that -- that really impressed me that came there. The other band that I saw was Benny Carter [phonetic sp.] and Mack [indiscernible], and J.J. was with that band. And they played just out in the city in Greensboro and it was a white-wash -- a white-washed barn or something. But that, boy, when I first heard "Malibu" and -- and some of the songs, you know, they was a good band. Porter killed, but all those guys in the band. So the Big Top was -- I remember that mainly because of Dizzy. That band.

Baker: And you had already heard Dizzy's recordings, so you were --

Moody: Yeah, yeah.

Baker: -- familiar with what he did.

Moody: Well, only heard the small group, but this was the big band.

Baker: Right.

Moody: You know. Sonny Williams [phonetic sp.]? Sonny's dead. I don't know. I forgot, but it sounded good, man, I know we -- we were real excited to hear it. Yeah.

Baker: Then he also got to hear you.

Moody: No. No. No. No.

Baker: Oh, he didn't know your playing at all?

Moody: He didn't know my playing at all. No. The way I got with Dizzy's band was Babs Gonzales [phonetic sp.] told Dizzy about me from being in Newark.

Baker: Oh. You and Babs knew each other from?

Moody: I knew Bab from Newark, New Jersey.

Baker: You went to high school together?

Moody: No. No.

Baker: Just knew -- knew him from being in town?

Moody: Just knew him from being around, like, he was Bab, you know.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Bab Gonzales, you know, Old Papa [indiscernible], you know, Bab [indiscernible]. So that -- that. And then when I -- when I -- when I went over and tried out for the band, I didn't make it because Walter Fuller [phonetic sp.] said, "You don't play loud enough." And he and Babs, me hollering loud, you know. Blah, blah, blah, blah, you know. So, anyway, 3 months, 2, couple months later, they sent me a telegram. My mother showed me a telegram. She was ironing clothes and she was smiling, I said, "What's up?" You know. And she pointed over there and I looked. There was a telegram said, "You start with us tonight." Well.

And I know my honey, she's heard this a million times, but when I started with them, we were at The Spotlight on 52nd St. [indiscernible] Monk [phonetic sp.] was the piano player. Kenny Clark -- Cluck [phonetic sp.] was the drummer. Ray Brown [phonetic sp.], bass, Milton Jackson [phonetic sp.], vibraharp [phonetic sp.]. Know, Howard Johnson [phonetic sp.], lead alto, you know. Cecil Payne [phonetic sp.], Ernie Henry [phonetic sp.]. Yeah. So. And I'm -- I was 21

years old. And I didn't know that much, you know, about -- and I'm glad I didn't 'cause if I would've, probably would've fainted, you know. [laughter] You know. So it's good to be naïve sometimes. You know.

Baker: And then how long were you with that version of the band?

Moody: I guess maybe 'bout 2 ½, 3 years.

Baker: That must've been a tremendous learning experience --

Moody: Oh!

Baker: -- for you.

Moody: Just to be there, you know, see all the cats and. And, listen, like we'd be playing and we're on 52nd St., right? So we'd be playing and I'd look up and people that I've admired for years, they'd be coming in. I'd look up and -- and in come Coleman Hawkins [phonetic sp.]. I'd look up, Don Byas come. Lester Young. You know, like. Bam! They just, you know. Damn. You know. So that was really exciting see all those, you know, Ben Webster [phonetic sp.], Billy Eckstein [phonetic sp.], you know. Wow, man! And this club -- the club was just a little wider than this room. I'm telling ya. And we'd be playing in the back there, you know, [indiscernible], you know. It was -- it was exciting. Yup!

Baker: Oh, oh, there was something -- let me just go back to the Air Force for one minute 'cause there was one thing I forgot to ask you when we took the break. When you left the Air Force, the Armed Services still, at that point, were not integrated?

Moody: Oh, no, no, no, no.

Baker: Is that right?

Moody: Oh, no, listen, I was discharged, I mean, they didn't become integrated for a few years. Not till Truman was president.

Baker: Right. Right.

Moody: When I went in, Roosevelt was president and he died while I was in the service, I think. Yeah.

Baker: Yeah. That's what I thought 'cause when you said '46, I knew it wasn't until a little bit later on, but I just wanted to make sure.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: Now, in The Spotlight, did you all stay in The Spotlight all that time, or were you working all sorts of places across that couple of years you were?

Moody: No, we were there for weeks. We played for a week, maybe two weeks, and then -- and then we would go somewhere else, like we'd do the Apollo Theater. Like, they had a chitling [phonetic sp.] circuit that we did, you know, and we'd go the Apollo Theater in New York, and then we'd go the Howard Theater -- no -- the Apollo Theater in New York then you go to the Royal Theater [phonetic sp.] in Baltimore, then you go to the Howard Theater in Washington, and then you go down South and go to some of these little theaters where you'd play one show a day or two shows or something, you know, where they filmed the so-called Negro movies. You know. And that was it. And then we'd be down South and play a white dance tonight or -- or a Negro dance tonight and then a white dance tomorrow. Or you'd go somewhere and you'd play a dance and there'd be a rope across the -- across the -- the dance hall and on this side, the Caucasians would be dancing on this side. The Negroes would be dancing, you know. And then you'd play a dance that'd be, maybe, a Negro dance and you'd have white spectators. You know. But at a white dance, no Negro spectators. That's it. You know -- you know. So.

And then we went on tour with Ella Fitzgerald, you know, it was like Ella Fitzgerald with the Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra. You know, we toured all down South like that. And we -- and we couldn't go, like the bus driver would have to get -- see if we could get -- we could get some food in the back of the restaurant, and he'd have to go see, you know, if we could eat anything. And the -- and it's funny because in those days, like, there would be one chef and be playing a dance and maybe something would happen and the chef would come and say, "All right, now, goddammit!" You know, "You're all going to stop this mess. Now, we're having a nice time here. We want everybody to act nice, now, you understand? Hear what I'm sayin'?" You know? "All right, now, you all behave yourself now, and go on, have a good time. All right. Go on, you can all play again, now, go ahead." One -- one chef. It couldn't happen today. [laughter] That was some funny clap, boy, that's, damn! That one chef, man, come in there, and everybody got quiet, too. Because, you know, listen, man, you know the Ku Klux Klan and all that crap. You know, not only that, but the whole town felt that way, you know. Well.

Baker: So you all were real aware -- you were very aware of the activities of the Klan and other groups in all the areas that you were traveling through?

Moody: Oh, well, I mean, you know that -- you know that they around there, even if the Klan wasn't, the people that were around, they were like -- listen, we play a dance -- we played a dance and -- and -- and a Caucasian gal was looking at -- at Ellman [phonetic sp.], I mean, she's -- I mean, she's -- you know, she had a few drinks, man, and -- and she just kept and Dizzy says, "Ellman, get off. Get off the band and go get on the bus. Get out of -- no, don't start any trouble." You know. Because that's just the way it was. You know? They'd come, you know, oh! And back off. Yeah.

Baker: When -- when you were touring and playing for dances -- I can remember some of the things I've read about Dizzy's various big bands, sometimes people would expect to hear dance music and sometimes what was being played wasn't really intended to be dance music, but what you all were playing was really intended for dances rather than some of the other tunes that we think of now --

Moody: No, no.

Baker: -- as associated with the band?

Moody: No, no.

Baker: This was actually bebop?

Moody: No. Let me say this. No. We played -- we played [scatting], we played "Things to Come", we played the library. Because, look, in the Apollo Theater -- not the Apollo Theater -- the Savoy Ballroom [phonetic sp.], we'd go up -- the people couldn't wait for us to get up there 'cause, see, if you know how to dance, like everything we played, you'd dance to it. We played [scatting] and the people would be off timing. Oh, man! Like I don't care how fast or slow something would be played, they could dance to it and they would. You see? So when we left New York and -- and -- and -- and went down South and started playing, both people, to use the expression, they were pissed off because, man, we'd be playin' -- we'd be playin' and they'd be standing there looking at us and some of them would be standing talking about, "We're going to get you when you get off 'cause you come here playing this doo doo for us, you must think we're some damn fools or something." And we're saying, "Damn! How come they don't dig the music, you know, man." And then Pancho was singing, Pancho Higgard [phonetic sp.], he'd be singing, "I waited for you". And the guy would be standing there, "Sing it, Ella Fitzgerald!"

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Ella Fitzgerald? Oh, they were pissed off at us, man, yeah. And it's funny 'cause everybody had a gun. [laughter] Yeah, everybody had their little gun [indiscernible].

Baker: You mean all the guys in the band had guns?

Moody: Yeah! [laughter] Yeah, man! And then one time we were on the bus and Eppy [phonetic sp.], the bus driver, said something to Lorraine [phonetic sp.], and we were down South, and Dizzy grabbed him up the collar and said, "You don't talk to my wife!" And people said, "Dizzy, please, wait till we get to Washington!" [laughter] You know. He was about to get us all killed out there. [laughs] Yep! It's funny. [indiscernible] Yeah, go ahead.

Baker: The traveling conditions at that time for musicians who were playing like you were going on that circuit and everything, that must've been very --

Moody: Well.

Baker: -- difficult trying to get accommodations --

Moody: Well, you didn't have anything --

Baker: -- trying to get meals.

Moody: -- like, if -- if you would go -- you always had to go to the Negro section of town and when you did, the rooms were like, say, \$3, but for us, they were like \$6. They were always more.

Baker: That's very expensive for that time, too, isn't it?

Moody: Well, they made it, I mean, it was more for us, yeah. They always [indiscernible] it up. And also, excuse me, we, like, had to stay in these rooming houses, the bus was cold, you know. Or either hot. But, like, we were playing the music we dug, you know, so you know, we'd be on the bus, you know. You look back at it, boy, like a lot of people nowadays, it's easy. You know, got credit card. You go to a hotel then and they'd tell you, "Oh, I'm sorry. We're all booked." You see? But if you got a credit card, you call in, they can't say that. Were no credit cards then. You know.

I never will forget. Ray Brown used to always -- I thought it was a big deal -- he kept a hundred dollars in his -- in his wallet, you know. Damn! A hundred. But that's Ray. Ray, the millionaire Ray, boy. [laughter]

Baker: Do you have any particular memories of certain people or certain concerts or certain things that happened to you across that time in your life when you were still so young and having the chance to work with Dizzy Gillespie? Anything special from that time you remember you'd like to talk about?

Moody: Oh, there were a lot of things like Ella Fitzgerald used to keep our money for us, me, Dave, and Joe Vail [phonetic sp.].

Baker: Dave Burns?

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] And we were in Indianapolis and her -- her purse was stolen. And we found it in the toilet in the -- in the water thing where there, you know, the flush thing --

Baker: The tank.

Moody: -- they took the money, put it in there. She gave us the money. She -- she -- she gave us the money, but she used to hold money for us to save, you know. And she [indiscernible], but -- but I remember that very well. We were staying in a Negro hotel there. You know. They -- they got us, you know.

They'd be waiting for you at certain places. Some people were groovy and some weren't. You know. So the same -- just the same, you know. We just have to watch where you are and you learn. You know.

Baker: Education on a lot of levels --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- not just a musical education, eh?

Moody: The bus was divided into two parts: the hooch hounds and the pot hounds.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: The back of the bus drank alcohol; the front of the bus smoked pot. [laughter] You know. Yeah, yeah.

Baker: And everybody traveled on the bus together? There was no --

Moody: Everybody was on the bus together.

Baker: -- separate car for the leader or anything like that?

Moody: Separate car? I mean, we got one funky bus. [laughter] Yeah, you know, yeah. Yep! And we used to get the bus from Jersey, you know, the bus company over there. But Eppy was a nice guy, though.

I'll tell you one thing that reminded. There was a guy by the name of -- you know there was a -- the Shaw Agency [phonetic sp.] --

Baker: Right.

Moody: And -- and Milt Shaw [phonetic sp.] was the son of -- of -- of Shaw.

Baker: Billy Shaw?

Moody: Billy Shaw, right. So Milt liked -- he liked Dizzy very much because he played trumpet. So, he was like the manager, so he -- his father sent him on the road with us. Me and Milt were the same age. All right? So we got -- when we got down South, I wanted a bath so bad, man, you know, and wanted to go, so I said, "Hey, Milt." I said, "You do me a favor?" He says, "Yeah, what?" I said, "Man, let me carry your bags and pretend like I'm your valet and let me 'cause I wanna get a bath, and I wanna go." He says, "Okay."

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: So I had his bags. "Hey, boy! Bring those over here!" I said, "Yessir." You know. [laughter] So I was, "Yessir" and I brought his bags and I got up in the room, put them down, I took me a bath, slept, had me a good night's sleep. And then brought his bags back downstairs, you know, that night and came out. That was it. [laughter] Yeah, you know.

Baker: Now, it wasn't too long after you left Dizzy that you became a leader, yourself, for the first time. Is that?

Moody: Well, I -- I came to -- well, first of all, I had a bout with alcohol. Okay? So I drank,

drank, drank too much.

Baker: So you were in the part of the bus that --

Moody: Huh?

Baker: -- you were in the part of the bus that drank alcohol? [laughs]

Moody: Yeah, but I don't mean -- I'm not talking about the bus --

Baker: Right.

Moody: -- but I mean, I just drank too much. And I know why I was drinking, now. The reason -- one of the reasons I was drinking was because -- well, first of all -- and -- and it lingered on till when I had my septet. And the reason was because people say, "Boy, you sound good." But I didn't know any music. You know what I mean? And -- because you're supposed to be going, but I -- you know, I said, "Damn! I." You know. "You sound good." "Yeah, but I." And I didn't know you were supposed to practice. I didn't know all those things. Believe it or not.

Baker: Even after all that time with Dizzy and being around the other musicians and seeing what they did and everything?

Moody: Oh, but you didn't see them. You went and played your thing and then you'd go another place.

Baker: Oh, oh!

Moody: Oh, no. I didn't find all that out until I got with Dizzy's quintet. And then when I got with Dizzy's quintet, then Dizzy didn't practice per se, like other people did. He'd sit at the piano and do things then apply it to his horn. Okay? You see?

Then I had my septet and I'm in Philadelphia at the Show Boat and some guy was saying, "Yeah, man, you know, Sonny Rollins [phonetic sp.], he wrote this down for me." I said, "He wrote what?" "This here." And I said, "Damn, that's cheating!" Cheating. And I said, "Oh, okay." So. And I begin this, oh, wait a minute. You're supposed to work things out, you know. I said, "Ah." And then I brought it to him. "Oh, okay." But, like, you work things out, but then I'm saying, "Yeah, but work 'em out how, through what?" 'Cause I didn't know my changes. Well, Tom MacIntosh [phonetic sp.] showed me the chords.

Baker: And when was that?

Moody: 19 -- well, when we were on tour with -- with Ruth -- no -- Brooks Benton [phonetic sp.] -- with Ruth Brown [phonetic sp.], The Falcons, and the James Moody Orchestra. Then.

Baker: Wow! That was, what? In the 1950s?

Moody: I guess it had to be in the '50s --

Baker: Somewhere in there.

Moody: -- I guess, yeah. But then -- and I never will forget -- Mac said, "Moody, why don't you learn your changes?" I said, "Nobody's [indiscernible]." He says, "I'll show you." I said, "Oh, beautiful!" So at night, everybody would be sleeping and me and Mac would be on the floor. He said, "Now, this, see, this is a F and this is a F7, and this is...." "Oh, yeah, Mac, man." [indiscernible]

Baker: See, I guess I just assumed that other players, more experienced players in Dizzy's band had taken you under their wing when you came onto the band and showed you things.

Moody: Let me put it to you this way. In those days, like, if you asked -- I never will forget -- one time, God bless him, I asked Sonny Steader [phonetic sp.], said, "Sonny, what's that you playing?" Sonny said [scatting]. I said, "Show me again." He says [scatting]. I said, "One more time." He said, "That's enough." [laughs] In those days, guys had what they had and it wasn't that much because they were just scales and itty bitty notes, so they didn't want to give that away. You see?

But now, man, like, you know, what little bit I know, if anybody go "Hey, here, here, take it." Because I get it back 20 fold. I don't -- I give you whatever I got; you can have it. You know? But in those days, that's it, man, they got [scatting], I mean, not only that, I mean, I can hear things. Now, I got me a little paper. If I hear something, I write down what I hear and I get it that way. You know. But in those days, that's the way people were, you know. I asked, "What are chords?" And people laugh at me. I guess they thought I was joking. But I was serious as a heart attack.

Baker: Did you ever find that your early difficulties with not being able to hear the spoken word well stood in the way of being able to hear the things you wanted to hear musically?

Moody: No. No because it wasn't so much not hearing the spoken word, it's just the point of knowing if you're speaking to me and then concentrating on your saying it -- something to me. You know, because I -- I don't hear high pitches. I can't hear it. That's why you never hear me trying to play high on a flute; I don't -- I can't hear that.

Baker: Really? Yeah, I always wondered about that.

Moody: I can't hear it. Like, to me it's just pffffff, you know. So that's.

Baker: Could you hear Dizzy when he was playing up high?

Moody: Yeah. [scatting] I hear that. But in mute, I can't hear it.

Baker: Oh! That's interesting. Yeah. So what happened that you ended up leaving Dizzy after a couple of years? Why did you -- why did you leave the big band?

Moody: Well, I have to be truthful about this. I took an overdose of Benzedrine, you know? And -- and -- and then they put me in a receiving hospital. My mother came to Detroit and got me. And then, I went back with the band, but I was kind of paranoid a little bit after that, you know. So, so my mother was telling my Uncle Louie about it, who was living in France, in Paris, at the time. So he said, "Sis, why don't you send him over here for a few weeks, and you know, maybe that'll be good." And I went over for a few weeks, stayed 3 years.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. So. And that's another thing. Being over there, like, at that time, the way people were treating, you know. I mean, they've got their problems, I guess, now, because they have a lot of other different cultures -- people of different cultures.

You notice I say "people of different cultures" because for me, I don't believe such a thing as different races. I mean, that's a bunch of crap. There isn't, you know. Because, like, if -- if -- if there was a difference in the race, then you wouldn't be able to -- to -- to -- to have children, you know. In other words, like, if they said, "Mate unto your own kind," that means you're not supposed to try to have a baby with an elephant 'cause you can't do it. That's not your kind. But another woman or man is your kind. See? So there's no such thing as this race, that race. That's a bunch of crap. You know. But.

So's a lot of so-called intelligence that people are supposedly giving you. From what I was talking before about -- about how [indiscernible], everything you look at is a lie. You look at television. All a lie. You see? Now, you can say, "Oh, it's good business," but -- but this cost \$2.99, you know? That's not good business. What you're trying to do is you're trying to screw someone into thinking that it's not \$3.00 when it is.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. And not only that, but it bugs me when I go to the store and they say only 29 cents. I say, "Here's 29 cents." Oh, yeah, but then now you got to pay the tax. So it doesn't cost 29 cents. It costs 33 cents. So why don't you say it costs 33 cents? Then you're telling the truth. Don't give me that, "Oh, but you know you gotta pay it." Hey, that's not right as far as I'm concerned. You know. So.

Until people start knowing that God made us all, and without God, nothing is going to -- to work and don't wait till -- till -- till something is sinking and then it's "Oh, Lord, please help me." I mean, you know.

[Begin CD 2]

Moody: And without God, nothing is going to -- to work. And don't wait till -- till something is sinking and then it's, "Oh, Lord, please help me." I mean, you know. And also to know that we're made in the image of God, which means all of us are godly, so you say God made you and didn't make me? You say God loves you better than he does me? As a matter of fact, it's written in all of the -- the so-called religious books that God is with the poor man, the -- the bum, the

[indiscernible], He loves him more because he needs God more than the person that loves God, you know. But, you know, that like I say, if you were blind, if everybody was blind, who would you know to hate? You know? So people are weird because if you just -- if you close your eyes and you don't know anything and you just touched somebody -- touched the skin, all right, now, what are they? You see what I mean? Don't do this? And even some people, you can do this. And then it will feel like something. Now, you see what I'm saying?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: So. I mean, ignorance really is -- is -- is prevailing, you know, in this country, and thanks to this country, a lot of the other countries are getting the same attitude.

Baker: But when you went to France to be with your Uncle Louie, you found that it was a whole different attitude --

Moody: A whole different ballgame.

Baker: -- where.

Moody: 'Cause people -- people took you for what you were and they didn't -- they didn't -- they didn't discriminate against you, you know, you could go anywhere, could do anything. Now, they are being -- they are being, like -- there are an awful lot of Africans now in -- in -- in France, and they're getting a little funny. But, check this out. The only reason they're getting funny is because every country, every Western country that has gone to any of the so-called third-world countries -- all they did was take from those countries. Now, when the people from those countries go somewhere, they don't have anything. And why don't they have anything? Because the cities in America, and Italy, and France, Germany, all these places -- the world came from out of there -- a lot of it -- to help build some of those places.

So now if they would do the same thing for the third world countries as they would do for any other Western country and build it up, how do you think -- don't you know that Africa is a beautiful place? It's wonderful! You know. And, like, you could have a beautiful Africa, a beautiful everywhere and, like, no one would want to go anywhere, and if they did, they would have something, like, when they went somewhere.

But, like, the Italians, the -- the Germans, the Dutch, all those different countries, you know, they went and they took from -- from Africa. Now, I'm not saying that -- when I say that -- when I say the Italians, I'm talking about the Italian government, the country, I mean, because, like -- like, when people look at me and say -- say I'm an American. I'm an American, but you know what, to me, the flag isn't the same because I say this, if you're going to ask me to raise my hand or something, I wanna raise it to God and pray it to God. So when you start talking about no prayer in the school, but you want me to say I pledge allegiance to the flag, I pledge allegiance to a flag who wouldn't let me go into a restaurant and eat? You see? Who would do what it does to people that they are of a so-called darker hue? Then I say this, I don't respect it, but I would never do anything against it. You see, I won't burn it. But I have to say what I feel in my heart because the government is wrong. And they were wrong then and they're wrong now. Because

underneath, I know that -- that doing wrong by -- by their families because they're instilling in their children that they are better than other people, and that is the worst thing in the world you can do because when the children find out it isn't true, then they're going to have problems, you see. "Oh, but I thought -- I thought," you see?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: You know, you have to take a thing as it is. I -- like, I respect everyone as I do myself, you know. And I think that if everyone else loved this -- loved their neighbor you love yourself. And what that means is, like, I wanna be able to make a living for my family. I wanna be able to take care of my family. I wanna be able to -- to do, you know, whatever I feel like I might be doing within the limits of a legal, good law. You see. And everyone would want that, I would think, you know. So I wish that for someone else. But now, people say they want this but I'm not entitled to have it because I'm not, what? You know, see what I mean?

Baker: Well, that must've been quite an eye-opening experience to be treated with respect and to have equal access to facilities and everything when you first --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- went to France. That must've been a really eye-opening experience.

Moody: Yeah, I look, I said, "Damn! That was something," you know. And I never will forget, I used to write home to my mother. I addressed it, USA. I used to write, "USA, Land of [indiscernible]".

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know, and my mother, "Jim, you wanna get in trouble?" You know. Aww, man, I'd be ticked off about that. But then -- like I said before, I wasn't angry at an individual that I would see; I was just angry at the system, the way it was.

Baker: Were you still not feeling well when you were in Europe, when you first went -- you're in Paris with your Uncle Louie and you're there for about three years.

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: Are you working as a musician across that time?

Moody: No, no. I didn't work at all. I didn't have to because my uncle, they had a large one-floor apartment. My uncle and my Aunt Flowers [phonetic sp.], and had a maid. I mean, it had maid quarters upstairs. I mean, it was really. And we were right there. We'd open up the -- the - the blinds -- not the blinds, but the shutters, and Eiffel Tower would be standing right there. I mean, we were right there. We were in hell of an [indiscernible], I mean, a wonderful

neighborhood.

Baker: And what did your uncle do?

Moody: He -- he worked for the government, the American government. Yeah, he -- he -- he got housing for the -- the military. And he worked. He was a civil servant. He did that, yeah.

Baker: And you learned to speak French while you were there?

Moody: No. I didn't learn there then. I learned afterwards because everybody I knew, they were like, they spoke English and they were -- there were like American, they hung together. You know. Birds of a feather. You know. Always stick together as they say. I thought -- when I came back, I felt so ashamed. I said, "Damn! Let me try to learn a few words here." You know. Yeah.

Baker: What sticks out in your memory the most about those three years that you spent in Paris, the experiences that you had as still a young man?

Moody: Well, a lot of things that -- that didn't -- that stick out now, but I got married when I was there. I had some children when I was there and -- and when I came back home, I came back to America, like, I had a hit record because I had made it in Stockholm, "Moody's Mood for Love" theme, and it was really the beginning of -- of -- of another experience which was very learned for me [indiscernible], and that was like being married and then having children and then being divorced, you know, and then -- it was a good experience. And I grew up some more.

Baker: So was there a time between the time you left Dizzy's band and the time you went to Paris that you were working as a musician? Was that when you made "Moody's Mood for Love" and?

Moody: No. What happened was I went down to the club Sandman [phonetic sp.].

Baker: I love this story. That's why I want you to tell it. [laughs]

Moody: Oh, okay. Well, the Sandman's a club in the [indiscernible], oclay. Oclay? Okay. And while I was there, this gentleman by the name of Anders Berman [phonetic sp.] who played -- he had something to do with the Metronome Record Company in -- in -- in Stockholm, in Sweden. So he happened to be there that night and he had asked me, said, "Would you like to make some records?" I said, "Yeah, that'd be." He said, "So we'd have you come fly up to Stockholm in make it." I says, "I don't wanna fly." He says, "Well, we'll give you a train ticket." So they gave me a berth, I had a train thing, and I went up, they put it on the fare, took me across, and I went up and we made a record. And that's when the "Moody's Mood for Love" thing came about.

And -- everything was funny -- not funny -- God did all this mainly because I didn't have an alto saxophone; I had a tenor. And then the -- this old beat up alto was sitting there. I made it on this alto didn't even belong to me, and then it came back to the States and it was a big hit. You know.

And I knew nothing about it because I was in Paris and -- one song on there and I'm at the club and I'm playing and a woman says, "Play 'I'm In The Mood For Love' for me." I says, "Okay." [scatting] She says, "No, no, no." She said, "Back there, you went up, but you went down this time." I said, "What the hell is she talking about?" I had no idea what she was talking about. Then come to find out. Babs came over, says, "Hey!" Said, "You gotta hit over there, man! Let's go over, get some of that bread!" I said, "Man, I don't wanna go back there." You know. And said. But anyway, "Man, come back, you gotta hit, you gotta hit." Well, finally, I went back. And when I got back, I didn't know what a hit was, I mean, you know. So we got all set, rehearsed the group. Man, the first engagement, I went there, there nobody in there. I said, "Look, nobody's here." 'Bout a half hour later, you couldn't get out of the joint, there was so many people. And it was like that for years. I mean, for a few years, you know, just people, just. Like, one night the snow, like two feet deep, and, man, in Detroit, the place was jam packed. They waited for us two hours because we were late getting there, driving in the snow. They were there, man, yep. Yep.

Baker: Wow, that's great!

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: So you did a lot of recording while you were in Par -- in Paris that little period when you were there?

Moody: No, not recording, just a little bit. See, what happened there, everyone knew I had a hit except me, so everybody was trying to [indiscernible]. I didn't know. I got back to the States, the guy called me, says, "Yeah, Moody, how 'bout a nice new Cadillac. We'll give you a new Cadillac." I said, "Mother, guy wants to give me a Cadillac." Mother says, "Son, people don't give you something for nothing so watch it." I said, "Yeah, you're right." So sure, he wanted to give me a car and everything if I record for him, you know. You know, so. That was the beginning of me knowing that you got made love to when you didn't want it. [laughs] [indiscernible] you know what I mean. Yep.

Baker: So then you came back to the States --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- and then what happened?

Moody: I came back in the States and -- and everything was, I mean, man, everywhere we went, boy, big success musically, you know.

Baker: And who was in your group at that time?

Moody: I had a fellow by the name of -- I had guys from Newark. I had Chink Williams [phonetic sp.] on drums, Larry Gowan [phonetic sp.] at the bass, [indiscernible] King [phonetic sp.] played piano with me.

Baker: Really?

Moody: Donald Cole [phonetic sp.] was a trombone player and Cecil Payne [phonetic sp.] was the baritone player, I think.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: And Dave Burns was the trumpet player. You know. That -- that was the band. Nice little band, too, man. Good little band and we played and then I sent for my family; they came over. You know, they. And then I'd be on the road and different things happen, you know. Time went by. And then had a boy. So I had a little -- I had -- I had a little boy and then later on, we had a little girl, all right? And things, you know, things were going along okay, but I guess maybe she was lonely for France, too.

Baker: Your wife was a French lady?

Moody: Yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative] She was lonely for France and I'd be on the road and I guess -- you ever hear that saying, "Love thy neighbor"? I think my neighbor took it literally.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Because -- anyway, that was -- I might as well, you know, tell it. There was a child out of wedlock by that, you know, not mine but he thinks he is, you know. And -- and he -- I almost don't want to say it, but I gotta tell it the way it is, man, alright? You know, you know. So his name is Andre and he thinks I'm his father and I'm not. You know, so. We're in the midst of doing that now. My wife and I, we're gonna, you know -- we're gonna talk to my ex-wife and let her know what I have in mind because, like, I think the kid should know who his, you know, real father is because he -- I know me, I wanted to find out about my family, the background, and I -- I can't find so much. You know. And I know it would be better for him. You know. And not only that, I don't want to live a lie, man, like he's got two wonderful and they're not mine and I know that. You know. And -- and his mother knows it, too. See, that's what -- you know, that's bad, too. And it's okay. You know, it's all right, like, a real soap opera.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: Life on the road.

Moody: Yeah, sure! But, boy, I'm happy now, man!

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Yeah. Yep. The truth will prevail. Yep!

Baker: So you were traveling a lot across the years after you came back?

Moody: Oh, yeah, and listen, I mean, all the time.

Baker: With the same group? For a while?

Moody: Oh, yeah, septet. Yeah, man, that's changed because I.

Baker: They had a name, too, didn't it?

Moody: Huh?

Baker: Didn't it have a name, too? James Moody and his -- ?

Moody: Septet.

Baker: Okay.

Moody: Know, James Moody and His Orchestra.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Orchestra, boy, there was 9 pieces! But it sounded good, man. It was a good little band, man, we would play, we'd play opposite a lot of different people.

Baker: Like?

Moody: Do you remember Count Basie?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: Ray Charles used to open for us.

Baker: Really?

Moody: Oh, yeah, like when he Flat Head [phonetic sp.] and Hank Crawford [phonetic sp.]. They all would open up. [indiscernible]. Dinah Washington, when she wasn't doing too well, like, with her records, they'd put her with us because, man, I was hot! And man, and we'd split the -- the percentage. And then when I cooled down and she got hot, there wasn't any percentage splitting. [laughs]

Baker: Were you with the same record label? Is that why they did that?

Moody: No, it was -- it was the same booking agent.

Baker: Booking agent.

Moody: Ben Barr. [phonetic sp.] The Raven bought his place. The name of his place, his home, was The Raven. 'Cause he had the raven, you know.

Baker: Oh, yeah, that's right. That group. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: And they -- he called it The Raven. Booked The Raven.

Baker: I'm sure they made some money for him.

Moody: I'm telling you about it.

Baker: Yeah. [laughs]

Moody: They used to do it! Listen, man, I used to -- 7 pieces, \$400 a night. And I know now when I look back, there was money on this table. I know that. But that's okay because, Lord, everybody's dead.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: I'm still here. See what I mean? [laughs] Yep! The Lord looks after those, you know. Who know who that they made love to. [laughter]

Baker: And who were some of the other artists across that time that your group worked with?

Moody: King Cole, Nat King Cole. We used to do the Apollo Theater, like, you know, I headlined at the Apollo Theater, you know, and, man, I never will forget that [indiscernible]. They had a theme song that goes [scatting] or something like that. [scatting] Boy, the people would just [indiscernible], oh, man, isn't that something? You know. Now, I play the people, they. [laughter]

Baker: And how long did that group stay together?

Moody: Oh, a pretty good while. I'm bad at dates, but then after that I got a phone -- what I did was I did standards. 'Cause Eddie Jefferson came with me, you know. Babs [phonetic sp.] was with me singing, and then Babs got funny. "I wanna," you know, "I'm singing this song," said, "And I want more money." You know. And, see, when you talk like that, that's not the way to talk to people. Say, well, "Oh, no! I want my money and if I don't get it, I'm quitting!" That's what was said. And my response was, "Good bye."

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know, so. And I started -- the word was out, I was looking for a singer. And Jefferson came in Cleveland, Ohio and tried out. I said, "You got the gig." Because Eddie was a hoofer, a dancer, and he would dance and play the drums and sing, you know. So he came because he and Little Earl [phonetic sp.], his partner, he came and he tried out and then from then on, he traveled with me.

And the funny thing is, a lot of places, people thought that I was traveling with Eddie, but Eddie was with my band, you know, like. So, later on, I'd be playing, I made him the manager. I says, "I tell you what, you go and count the people that come in," because we get -- got paid percentage wise, you know. And he clicked to see how many people came in, you know, so we could see, you know, get the right money.

A lot of times, like, we've had the promoters run off, you know, with the money, and, oh, man! In those days, it was something or other, you know.

Baker: You did a lot -- quite a lot of recording with that particular --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah.

Baker: -- group, too.

Moody: Yep! Yeah. We did a lot for Chess, Chess Records and Argo.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] And.

Baker: Which was really, I guess, more of a blues and rhythm and blues label than actually a label that was considered a jazz label at the time.

Moody: Right! Right. It was a rhythm and blues -- but don't forget, in those days, too, they had race records.

Baker: Right, and I'd like for you to talk a little bit about that.

Moody: Well, race records, in other words, you know what Dinah Washington used to sing, but any -- any so-called Negro artist, they always figured they were just for Negroes and they didn't want, I guess, the Caucasians to hear it because they would be influenced. What happened? Look at 'em now! [laughter] Anybody [scatting] who is it? I don't know. You can't tell whether he's black or white, you know. Who cares? He's screaming! [laughter] You know what I mean?

Yeah, so. But all those -- all those different things, you know, it's always been a double standard and I still maintain that because it was cert -- there was certain people who played, they got more money than other people who played and it shouldn't have been that way and it was because of, you know what I mean. Their color. Yeah. Yeah. You know.

But as far as I'm concerned, in those days, there was more like there seemed to be more Negroes playing, I guess, and -- but now, there -- there -- there -- I think there're just as many Caucasians doing it now and I've always said that environment plays a big part in anything that you do. Consequently, when they start talking about "it's a black music," I don't agree with that, like,

because, like, like, in the days when the -- when the so-called blacks first were doing it, like, the -- the white boy would venture across the tracks and -- and pick up from the so-called black guy, he was the one that became known as "bad white boy", see? But now, they've got records, you know, and people can listen and you can be anywhere, and if you hear something and you like it, [indiscernible] got it, you're cool. So there's no such thing as only black can play.

And I say that, too, when I'm giving a clinic because there's been many a good so-called white kid that could've been a hell of a musician, but he was turned off the track because someone said he didn't have soul or he didn't have rhythm. And that's -- that's a lie. We've all got it. We're all the same! I mean, now, the point is, we might have eyes, nose, mouth, hand, if you don't practice, I'm sorry. But you mean to tell me you got a -- a white kid who practices and do his homework, he's not going to play his butt off? I'm sorry, you're in for a rude awakening. These people, "Aw, that white boy can't play got get up and play that [indiscernible]" instead of, "Well, you know, now what you got to say? Well, oh, well, he's an exception." [laughter] Well, there are a lot of exceptions out there right now. You know what I'm saying, Lida?

You know, the only thing to do, man, is to practice and get better yourself rather than criticizing. Talking about this -- he different, no, he playing his ass off, that's what he's doing. Anyway.

Baker: The different places, the venues that you were playing in when you were working basically on a rhythm and blues kind of circuit, was that different than when you were, for example, playing with Dizzy Gillespie's big band, where people were coming specifically to hear jazz, did you find the audiences were different?

Moody: You know, when I played with my little septet, little septet, did you know we -- listen, we were playing somewhere in Texas and Wilson Pickett or somebody like that was supposed to be on the band and he didn't get there. He was late. You know what the people said? "The hell with it!" Something like that was said and we played. Excuse me. We played and the people loved it. You know what I mean? I mean, they loved it! I mean 'cause we had a hip little 7-piece band with good arrangements [indiscernible] -- excuse me -- Gene Keyes [phonetic sp.], Jimmy Boyd [phonetic sp.], man, and the piano player doubled on peckhorn [phonetic sp.], which is a little B-flat horn, looks like a small euphonium [phonetic sp.] -- small euphonium, and man, so [indiscernible] four [indiscernible], we had five. And Quincy Jones did some things. Benny [scatting], you know, nice harmony, and the people. First of all, quality will tell every time. And even though a person isn't -- isn't educated musically, they can tell some quality when they hear it a little bit. You know, they might not understand it, they gotta say, "Well, I don't understand it, but it must be good." You know? Because as soon as you can understand some -- as soon as I understand something, then I know I got to move on. See? Because if I understand it, I don't wanna just understand it, I want to get better. So if I hear some music and I understand it from the get-go, that means I've got to learn something else. See? I've got to get some other stuff that I don't understand. You know? Because then I'll be opening up my mind and I'm learning.

Can you understand that philosophy that I? You know. Because as soon -- first of all, you let something go [scatting], people now, now they're going. You know. Man, you know what that comes from? Because, basically, and they're talking about savages, that's what's happening.

[laughs] That's what's happening: savagery. You know. I mean, you know, the Lord [indiscernible] next to the ground. [indiscernible]

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: What's the difference between the Indian going [scatting] and the guy saying, [scatting] "[indiscernible] hoe down!" And what's the difference between that and [scatting]? Huh?

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: One is savage and one is civilized? BS! [laughter]

Baker: How long did you keep the septet together?

Moody: About -- you know, I'm really bad at dates. But.

Baker: It was at least a couple years, wasn't it?

Moody: Oh, it was longer than that.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: Longer than that.

Baker: That's what I thought, yeah.

Moody: And then after that, like, I started -- I disbanded. Oh, there was a fire at the Blue Note.

Baker: In New York?

Moody: No. In -- the Blue Note in Philadelphia. The place burned down and all my instruments, the music, everything, burned up with it, you know. I got a cute little thing to say about that. My bass player, John Latham [phonetic sp.], God bless him, he -- he wasn't a learned man, but he was a very nice person, you know what I mean? John looked at me, says, "Yes," said, "I know it burned everything up." And he said it, "It even burned -- there was -- there was an organ down in the basement and it burned the organ up, too." And I said, "Damn! An organ?" I didn't know of any organ that they had at the Blue Note because it was always kind of jazz, you know. He said, "Yeah! It was in the newspaper! You see the newspaper, there's an organ." I said, "Show me, John." So he brought me the newspaper and it said, "The origin of the fire originated in the basement." I said, "Oh, boy." [laughs] And he [indiscernible] an organ in the basement. You know what I mean. A nice guy. I mean, I mean, he loved that group, man. After he left -- I hated to do it, too, 'cause he did everything for that band, but the guy, like I had Tom MacIntosh, Jimmy Boyd, so I got so I got Ernest Outlaw [phonetic sp.], he was the bassist. He sounded like Wilbur Ware [phonetic sp.]. So, you know -- you know, so the band was. Then finally, I made it a -- a sextet and it was popping and people -- people are funny. They want to hear the same warmed-over doo doo all the time, you know, and man, like, I had guys younger,

"Let's do this, Moody." I say yeah 'cause I always want to do something better. So finally, man, I had -- I had an organ drill with Mickey Tucker [phonetic sp.], Eddie Gladden [phonetic sp.], and I had Eddie Jefferson and me. And we used to go play these places, man, and it was -- we'd have a market. And finally, I just gave up, man. I says, "I quit."

And then, sure enough, phone call, Dizzy Gillespie called me. "Moody, so what are you doing?" I says, "Oh, I'm just cooling, trying to figure out what I'm gonna do." He says, "Why don't you come with me?" Said, "Well, let me speak with my wife." So Margina [phonetic sp.], Michelle [phonetic sp.], my daughter's mother, who knows Linda. They all, you know, they all cool, you know.

Baker: Oh, that's great.

Moody: And she.

Baker: So you're living in -- back in New Jersey at this point?

Moody: No, living in New York!

Baker: Living in New York.

Moody: Forest Hill [phonetic sp.], yes. So says, "Okay." So I joined Dizzy's quintet.

Baker: And that was about 1950-something.

Moody: 1950-something. 1956 or something. And Lalo Shiftman [phonetic sp.] was the piano player. Rudy Collins [phonetic sp.] the drummer, and Chris White [phonetic sp.] was [indiscernible]. Then Lalo left and -- and Dizzy asked -- and I said get Kenny [indiscernible], so Kenny [indiscernible] came with the group, you know. And then, when Kenny left, then Mike came with the group. Mike Longwell [phonetic sp.], you know. So.

Baker: Well, all super players.

Moody: Yes.

Baker: All of them.

Moody: I traveled all -- you know what, Lida? Here's what -- what -- what's sad now. Everywhere I go, I was there with Dizzy. The first time I went, I was there with Dizzy. Everywhere I go now, it's the first time I'm there and Dizzy --

Baker: Isn't there.

Moody: -- isn't there. Yeah, yeah. So. But. But.

Baker: You all must've had such.

Moody: Oh, nice times [indiscernible].

Baker: Fun.

Moody: And I remember lots of things. And, like, certain days go by and -- and something will pop up that happened at [indiscernible]. I'll be walking through the airport in -- in Brussels and I'll walk through and I went in the baggage place where Dizzy went and bought a bag. And then I went out and I went to the hotel and then I thought about the time Dizzy says, "Come on and we'll gonna have -- take you to dinner." And -- and we were sitting and eating these things and Dizzy took another one, picked up, and was getting ready to eat it and the head came out.

Baker: Woooooo!

Moody: [laughs] Anyway, the people [indiscernible], yeah.

Baker: Snails?

Moody: Yeah. We cracked up on that, man.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Yeah. And I remember one time we were in -- we were in Ohio. [indiscernible] And -- and Dizzy said I'm taking you to dinner, and boy, I ate. I ate. And Dizzy said -- I gotta say it like Dizzy -- "That's the last time I'm taking you out to dinner!" [laughter] In America. [laughter] Yeah, man, there's a lot of -- a lot of nice times. Yeah.

Baker: And you were with the quintet for a long time then.

Moody: 8 years. 8 years. Yeah. Yeah. Everywhere, man. Japan, Africa, you know. [indiscernible] I mean, everywhere. Australia. You know what? I went all over the world. The only place I didn't go, India. Everywhere I go now, like I was just in Athens, oh, man. I was in Istanbul. I was in Stockholm. And everywhere I went, I was there more than once. You know. You know? Yep.

Baker: That must've been -- when you're in all these different countries, when you're doing all the traveling that you've done over the years, but especially during that 8-year period, was it like when you went to Paris for the first time where it was like -- almost like a whole different world the way people respected you and treated you and what have you?

Moody: No. No. What it was is, after a while, you see what happened -- you know, when I went back down South after they had integrated the South, it was sickening! It was sickening mainly because everybody's, "Old Mr. Moody! What happened to Old Mr. Moody? Oh!" I mean, they were just bending over backwards to make you feel welcome, you know, and all I wanted to do was just do what I do and be left alone and, I mean, you know, let me be myself. You know?

But -- but, like, why does it have to be a big deal for a person to go somewhere and someone treat you civil? Don't look at you and have a -- a -- a formed opinion about you already as to what you are? You know. So, for me, I don't even look at it that way anymore because I know for a fact -- 'cause some people are gonna look and they already know what I am, some people will look and won't know, and some people will look and don't give a damn. You know?

Baker: Right.

Moody: And I could care less what they're saying. The only thing I don't -- don't just come crowding me, that's all.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. Other than that, I. You know. Because first of all, you know, it's the way you carry yourself, too. I don't look for -- for problems. I try to be a gentleman everywhere I go. And some people, sometimes, they won't let you be it, but you still have to do it anyway.

Baker: Did you find that pretty much regardless of where you went all over the world, the people were responsive to the music?

Moody: You know what? You know what? People are responsive to the music, but most of all, people are responsive to you especially if you try to say something in their tongue and -- and act like a gentleman. I mean, you know, you know, act -- act civil. Act nice. People are nice all over the world. You know. There's a saying, and excuse me, I'm not being disrespectful, they said, "Everybody's got one, but you don't have to act like one." You know. So. You know. People -- people are the same all over the world; they want the same thing. And you see the same thing all over the world. And when you do see it, you say, "Why?" And it's the same. Ignorance is the same, no matter what language it is, ignorance is ignorance. And you see it in every country.

Baker: Were you playing mostly Dizzy's music and Dizzy's arrangements --

Moody: Yeah!

Baker: -- across this period?

Moody: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Play [indiscernible], you know, "Umbrella Man", [indiscernible], you know, "One Old [indiscernible]". Yeah. Was nice.

Baker: Who were some of the -- was -- was the personnel fairly stable across this time or was there?

Moody: Yeah. It was the same group.

Baker: Same group?

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Except then after a while, Chris White left and he got a -- George Stefano [phonetic sp.] was playing electric bass and he, you know. And. And. But with George Stefano, Rudy Collins, Mike Longwell, and myself. And Dizzy.

Baker: And everybody -- everybody knew Dizzy all over the world. Everybody knew him and.

Moody: Everywhere he'd go, like, we'd go through the airport and Dizzy would be sitting down and see people walking by, walking around, "That's him, that's him!" You know? It was like, he was loved everywhere. They dug him. You know. And they -- they loved his music. And, you know, I look at something -- you know, people used to go to Europe and paint their faces and wear funny different kind of clothes and things, you know, call themselves playing music. You know what I mean?

Baker: Oh, okay.

Moody: That stuff, man, that stuff is out! Because too many, like, first of all your -- your husband, David, knew people that go over teaching music, people don't come over with that crap. You play some music for me.

Baker: You're talking about groups like the Art Ensemble and?

Moody: Well, I don't know what -- what the groups are, but they --

Baker: They -- they.

Moody: -- paint their faces.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: I don't know who they are. I just see people with painted faces, they're playing. What has that got to do with music?

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Especially a saxophone. Like, if you're going to play the woodwind and you're going to chew the bow and arrow or something, then you know, but I mean, if you're gonna play jazz, still has nothing to do with the [indiscernible], when your face is painted, I mean, as far as I think or know, that's like when you're going to war. When I get ready to play music, I'm going to -- to do something, like, you know, pleasant and loving, hopefully.

You know, rather than, you know, like, because that's what paint is. War paint. People don't paint their faces like that to go and -- and be friendly. I mean, that's, you know. I mean, maybe some African women might put a little paint here or something just a little thing, but not -- when you paint your face like that, everywhere, that's so you can look fierce in battle. You know.

Baker: Has the festival circuit started already about this time or were you doing basically individual concerts and things?

Moody: We did festivals. We did Monterrey and -- and [indiscernible] Festival --

Baker: Newport?

Moody: Newport. We did those. Yes. And then Diz did jazz at the philharmonic and -- and he said, "Get Moody." Dizzy always said, "Get Moody, man." And so I was on that with the -- it was like, Teddy Wilson [phonetic sp.] on piano, George -- Bob Crenshaw [phonetic sp.] bass, Louie Belson [phonetic sp.] drums, Benny Carter [phonetic sp.], Coleman Hawkins [phonetic sp.], Lou Simms [phonetic sp.], Clark Terry [phonetic sp.], Dizzy, and myself. And T-Bone Walker.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know what's funny? Every time I see Clark Terry, you know, we see each other, we always say, "Woman, you must be crazy?" And, now, you know what the significance of that is? We were doing the jazz at the philharmonic's [indiscernible] Hall in London and all the British people are sitting there, you know, like, you know how they would sit, you know, with their, you know, upper class look. We'd play and they'd [clapping softly]. You know? T-Bone Walker came out with this conch and he'd point it towards [indiscernible] turn it up in this shiny suit, and he took his guitar effect [scatting]. "Woman, you might be crazy," and people say, "Argggggghhh!" Say, man, what I -- you know, "To do the things you do."

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: I said, "Okay." Clark Terry [indiscernible], you know. Every time we see each other, say, "Woman, you must be crazy." Yep. Those are nice memories, you know.

Baker: Then after those 8 years with Dizzy, did you leave for a specific reason to do something else at that time?

Moody: Well, I guess, it was -- I guess -- I guess, yeah, because I just wanted to, I guess, maybe do something else. You know.

Baker: So you were playing pretty much the same repertoire --

Moody: Yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- across that time --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- with the same people, and knowing you and your desire --

Moody: Yes.

Baker: -- to always feel like you need to grow --

Moody: Well.

Baker: -- was that a difficult situation to do pretty much the same thing for 8 years?

Moody: It was. In a way, it was because every night at 10:00, I'd know exactly what we'd be playing, you know, [indiscernible] so -- so. I, you know, and then I just, you know.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative] And it must be hard because you -- you loved Dizzy so much --

Moody: Yeah!

Baker: -- that to go and do something else --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- that must've been difficult for you.

Moody: Yeah. So -- so I left and then we had -- what did I get after that?

Baker: Was that when you went to Vegas or?

Moody: I think after that, I did.

Baker: Because --

Moody: I did.

Baker: -- that's not a musical scene that's well-known or well-documented. I really wanted to ask you some things about, you know --

Moody: 'Bout Vegas?

Baker: About Vegas and what was happening in the whole scene out there. Especially for black musicians at that time.

Moody: Yeah. Could we -- could we -- ?

Baker: Take a break?

Moody: For a minute? Yeah.

Baker: Sure.

Moody: I just wanna open that window.

Baker: So let's talk a little bit about your years in Las Vegas. Could you tell me, first of all, when you -- when you left Dizzy and made the decision that you were going to do something else, did you leave and do something else right away or was there a time when you kinda were trying to decide what you wanted to do and this opportunity came up?

Moody: Well, first of all, I was married -- I was married to a lady by the name of Margina and she wanted to move to California because that's where I met her.

Baker: Right. Now, this is not the lady from France --

Moody: No.

Baker: -- this is -- this is.

Moody: No, we were divorced.

And so, we moved -- I says, "Okay." So we moved from -- we had moved from -- from Forest Hill to Newark and we moved from Newark to Westwood, in -- in Los Angeles. Okay? And so while we were there, I would go and I would do maybe a club date or a concert or something --

Baker: As a leader?

Moody: -- huh?

Baker: I'm sorry. As a leader?

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: Yeah. I was talking with Howell Land [phonetic sp.], and Howell said, "Moody?" I said, "I wish I could just stay home and be with my daughter." You know, like, because Michelle was just -- she was like, a -- a baby, you know. So what I did was I -- I was talking with Howell Land and Howell was working with Tony Bennett in Vegas. He says, "Why don't you talk to Jimmy Mullidor [phonetic sp.]" You know, he was a contractor in Vegas.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: I says, "Okay." So I called Jimmy Mullidor, I said, "Yeah, come on up." He says, you know, "We'll see." So I went up there and I think I had to stay two months or a month or something and -- in order to get my card.

Baker: Oh, union card?

Moody: Union card, yeah, in Vegas. And then -- and then I joined the -- the -- the band at the -- at the Flamingo Hilton. Okay? 'Cause you had the Flamingo Hilton and then you had the -- the

Las Vegas Hilton, the big one. You know. So he broke me in at the Hilton where I played, like, for Leslie Elgams [phonetic sp.]. Did I play T -- I think I played Tony Bennett there, too. Tony Bennett and -- and a couple of the guys that used to have TV shows or something like that. And then I -- later on, I went over to the Las Vegas Hilton and I was there where I played Elvis Presley, Ann-Margaret, Connie Stevens, Glen Campbell, the Osmonds, Liberace, did the Mike Douglas [phonetic sp.] TV shows, [indiscernible], Milton Berle, Jack Carter [phonetic sp.], Charlie Rich, Ike and Tina Turner, Bill Cosby, Lou Rawls, and I'm missing a few people because [indiscernible], but we did all that, you know, playing those shows.

Baker: Was it essentially a house band --

Moody: Yeah. House orchestra. Yeah.

Baker: -- house orchestra?

Moody: Yeah because you had the woodwinds, the string the section, you had the drums, the percussion, you know. Broadway, like, the spectacular, like --

Baker: Right! Right.

Moody: -- so -- so that's what I did. And I did that for about 6 ½ years, I think. And I didn't know clarinet. And, boy, you're talking about something like, oh, man, man! Every night I'd be home squeaking and squawking trying to get that. Oh, boy!

Baker: Because you had to -- in that kind of a situation, the saxophone players had to double on --

Moody: -- oh, yeah.

Baker: -- all the other instruments.

Moody: Yeah, yeah, you know. One time there -- oh, Paul Anka. I did Paul Anka. I did 5, 6 doubles. I had -- I had -- I had tenor, alto, baritone, bass clarinet, clarinet, flute -- no, 7 doubles - - and piccolo. Yep! You know, and you'd be playing and [indiscernible].

Baker: And you had to be a very good reader to do that because there wasn't a lot of rehearsal time for those shows to be put together.

Moody: Oh, well, they would -- no, they would --

Baker: Or would they?

Moody: I have to tell you the truth. I wasn't that good of a reader. I mean, but the point was, I knew when to and when not to and as I was doing it, I got better. You know, so I got -- I mean, I got better and, shucks, next thing you know, man, [indiscernible], man, I had it covered. You know. You know. Like I didn't have trouble with the -- syncopation, that was cool, it was just

the notes flying by, boy, you know, so I was cool.

Baker: Was there the same musical director or did each one of the --

Moody: No.

Baker: -- artists that came in, they had their own?

Moody: They had their own conductors. Own conductors, yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative] So.

Baker: And they would bring their book -- and you would bring their book?

Moody: They would bring their book in there, that's right. Like, when you play a show for one week, and while you'd be playing this one week, and then that third day, you -- you start rehearsing for the show that's going to come in, you know, the next show coming in, or if it was Liberace, you'd be [indiscernible] come in and rehearse -- oh, Steven -- Steve [indiscernible] or the Osmonds or whatever, you know. And I mean, you know, you have this much music and you couldn't get out of there until you were there. [laughs]

Baker: Boy, that's a good-sized stack!

Moody: You tell me about it! Yep. Yep.

Baker: But it was something different all the time.

Moody: Oh, yeah, it was different, and you know what? And it was good for me. Because I learned an awful lot. I really did. I learned -- see, because with Dizzy's band, man, it was like just got a [scatting] you know, but this, man, like, it was like [scatting], you know. Oh, okay.

Baker: Now, was everything written or did you have solo space?

Moody: No, no, no, no, no, no, no solo. No, it was all written. That's right. I take one thing down there with 4 bars and the guy put up there, "Get hot." [laughter] "Get hot." Yep. Uh-huh. [affirmative] "Get hot." But it was very, very interesting. You know. And if I had it to do all over again, I would. Because I learned a lot. I really did.

Plus, Jimmy Mullidor, like, he called me yesterday. "Moody," he says, "Man, I'm getting this stuff." Boy, they's call me about, you know, like "Countdown" and "Giant [indiscernible]" say, "Yeah, man, remember what you told me?" I said, "Okay. I'm doing the same thing, trying to get it." You know. Yep.

Baker: So there were a lot of jazz musicians there even though you weren't working playing jazz, still, a lot of you were there?

Moody: Well, what it was, see, at that time, Vegas was like a -- what do you call it? Security. Because you -- you had a gig and what happened was, when the union, like, folded with this little stuff and they started bringing in little self-contained groups -- .

Baker: Now, what -- what -- what was that?

Moody: Well, you know, I really don't know what it was, but they started bringing in self-contained groups and they started cutting music out of the lounges and things and piping in music.

Baker: When did that happen?

Moody: That's -- that's what's happening now.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: There are no jobs in Vegas. You know, I got out of there just in time. I split, man, I wanted to because I got a divorce. And I wanted to play -- I wanted to play some jazz, man. Because, see when I was there, I didn't wanna play jazz. Because, first of all, there was no time for it. There was only time for that clarinet. You know, inside of, you know. Be able to get through those parts, you know? So, but I'd do it again if I had to, you know.

Baker: Now, was your family in California at this point and you were in Vegas --

Moody: No, no, no, no, no.

Baker: -- or were you all together?

Moody: No, the family was there. We had a house and everything, yeah. We were set. Yep. Yep. Yep. We were set and then, like, you know, the -- the differences between husband and wife, you know. You know, we just outgrew -- she wanted to do one thing, I wanted to do another thing. I said, "Well," so I split. You know, went to New York.

Baker: Now, the groups the -- the house band, for example, the house orchestra at the Las Vegas Hilton where you were, these were mixed bands.

Moody: Mixed in what way?

Baker: Mixed -- white musicians and black musicians --

Moody: No, no, no, no.

Baker: -- all in the same band or no?

Moody: No. Let me see. There was a guy by the name of Willie -- I forgot what Willie's last

name was. Willie was a Negro, but in this band -- in this band, they wanted somebody Negro in there, but -- but they didn't seem to be able to get one, but just before I -- I left, there was a guy -- what was his name? Rudy? -- Rudy or something. He had been in the Air Force band. He got a job there then everything folded. But I was the only -- only so-called, you know.

Baker: I was wondering about that because it seemed to me in -- much in the same way as the Hollywood Studios were at that time --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- that that was a scene that wasn't real open.

Moody: No, no, see, because first of all, you see, it was security and it's always like that, you know, when you go places, most places where there's a job with security, I mean, you might have a token there, but other than that --

Baker: Right.

Moody: -- it's for the -- it's for the, like -- like -- like Redd Foxx said, "It's for God and three other white men." You know. [laughter] You know. So, like, you know what I'm saying? So that, but -- but I was the only -- I was -- the whole band was Caucasian with a couple of Mexican gentlemen and I was the only Negro in there. And they had females in there, you know, playing strings along with the guys and everybody was -- everybody was wonderful.

Baker: Great.

Moody: You know, then again, it's the way you carry yourself, you know. You are what you are. But, you know, I'm proud of what I am, you know?

Baker: You must've thanked your mother --

Moody: Oh, yeah!

Baker: -- a million times over for.

Moody: And you know what? And -- and -- and everybody in Vegas, like, we have friends there now, you know, like, Ralph Enriquez [phonetic sp.] who was the bass player with Liberace. He works at a record store there now and he sends us albums that we don't have or something, you know. Jerry Mullidor, talked to him and, oh, man, what's his name? Oh, the trumpet player, man, real good trumpet player. I mean, played his butt off, too, there in Vegas. I'll think of the name. But -- but all these guys, man, they're playing, you know. When I go down now, I try to see them.

Baker: That's beautiful.

Moody: I try to see them. And Linda met there, [indiscernible], so. I -- I'd do it again if I had

to.

Baker: Your departure from the whole Vegas scene came as a result of which? Your desire to change direction musically and do something else or the fact that your marriage was breaking up --

Moody: Well --

Baker: -- or the fact that the music scene was not?

Moody: -- everything together. Everything together. It all started falling together.

Baker: So all those factors together --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- led you to leave the Vegas scene and now think about doing something else?

Moody: I left and then I came to New York, right. Uh-huh. [affirmative] Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: And now -- now what are you doing?

Moody: Well, I left Vegas and I -- I had a quartet. Mike Longwell and Paul -- Paul -- [indiscernible], but Paul West [phonetic sp.]. And -- and the drummer. Oh, I forgot what the drummer's name was. But anyway, we did some clubs and things and then I -- I kept doing that. Then finally, I moved -- I moved to Canada. Okay? And I lived in Canada for about 3 -- 3 years.

Baker: When did you -- when did you leave New York City and go to Canada?

Moody: You know --

Baker: Do you remember?

Moody: -- I don't remember.

Baker: That was in the '60s, wasn't it, or?

Moody: Yeah, something like that. No!

Baker: No? Early?

Moody: No. '70's.

Baker: Oh, that's right! We're later. We're later --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- 'cause, you'd been in Vegas for quite a while.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: That's right.

Moody: Yeah, so I -- know, I went there and I stayed there for maybe 3, 4 -- how long was I there, Honey? 3 or 4 years?

MOODY, LINDA: You were up there -- you were there till through almost '89 -- '88.

Moody: Yeah, until, until.

MOODY, LINDA: So. This would be maybe '85, '86, '87.

Moody: Yeah, then I left 'cause I had a relationship up there and I -- I left there and came back and I didn't want to be bothered with anything. I said, "That's it! You know, no more. I just wanna practice and study." And then I got a -- a -- a gig coming to San Diego at a place called Elario's [phonetic sp.] and that's where I met my Honey. Yeah.

Baker: [laughs] And the rest is history.

Moody: Yeah. I met Honey and -- and I had a 2-week engagement here. I didn't want to leave, but I was going on a tour of Africa with Dizzy. You know, so, I -- I didn't want her to forget me, so I sent her a dozen roses, had a dozen roses sent every Monday to her office, you know. And that was going on 5 years now.

Baker: Isn't that something?

Moody: And -- and she still gets 'em. You know? Yeah. Yeah. You know what I mean?

Baker: That's beautiful!

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: That's beautiful!

Moody: [indiscernible] That's funny 'cause she wasn't looking to get married or anything, either. You know?

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: So. You know. So, anyway, that's what I'm doing now is trying to get better, you

know?

Baker: I'm going to slide you back --

Moody: Sure!

Baker: -- coming out of Vegas and going back to New York City. The quartet that you had at that time, now, did you pretty much stay in the New York City area? That was a group you toured a lot, wasn't it?

Moody: No. What I did was I played -- we played -- we op -- we played at the Sweet Basil. Okay? And then I did -- you know, played the Sweet Basil, I did some things with Clyde [phonetic sp.] and -- and his -- his concert band thing that he had.

Baker: Was that the World of Trombones or was that something else?

Moody: No, no. Different band.

Baker: This was a different band?

Moody: Different band with a lot of different people in it. And then I'd -- then I would go to Washington, D.C. and do something as a single. And I'd do the Left Bank Jazz Society [phonetic sp.], you know. Things like that.

Baker: Lots of different things?

Moody: Yeah. I'd go to Canada and work up at the club up there, you know, like that. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: And -- and then you were back off and on with Dizzy, also, across that --

Moody: Oh, yeah!

Baker: -- time?

Moody: And then, like, Diz would do something or something and I'd go and do something with him and then I'd, you know. Go back to my thing or do a kind of concert. I'd do, you know.

Baker: You were doing quite a lot of recording around this time, too, weren't you? Isn't this -- is this the vintage of Heritage Home and some of those things, or?

Moody: I did some of that too, yeah. Yeah. Somewhere around there, yeah. But it was nice, though, because, like, Section [phonetic sp.] heard me doing something and Section says, "Yeah, no more vamps! No more vamps!"

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know what a vamp is? A vamp is when you go [scatting]. There's no change, I mean, you just play on that one thing. Section said, "No more vamps!" You know. [scatting]

Baker: [scatting]

Moody: You know what I mean? [laughs] Yeah.

Baker: You might want to tell 'em who you're talking about, too.

Moody: Oh, Section is Jimmy Heep [phonetic sp.]. We call it The Section because it's saxophone section. Yeah, that's who that is, my buddy, boy. Yeah.

Baker: Yep. I didn't know if we were getting too close to the end of the -- the end of this tape --

[Begin CD #3]

Baker: Hang on just one second. [laughs] I'd like to spend a little time now letting you talk about your long personal and musical relationship with Dizzy. I know there are lots of wonderful incidents that you could talk about -- that you could speak about --

Moody: Well --

Baker: -- things you could speak about what he meant to you --

Moody: Yeah, well --

Baker: -- the things that you did with him over the years that were important.

Moody: Well, you see, that's the kind of question that it would take a lifetime to answer because, you know, you say, well how do you feel about someone, well, I love him. I loved him. But musically I'm still learning, you know? The different things that happened -- like I say this every time someone asks me something and says well, what do you -- and my wife brought this up. Linda brought this up, she says, "Honey, you say that all the time." But the reason I say it all the time is because it happens all the time when I say, Ah, that's what he meant. You see? And so -- and I'm talking a lot like a -- like a A minor seventh flat five, you know. You look at that as a C minus six, that's what he looked at it. See? Doesn't that bring another dem -- see? It makes it, you know. So, and for those of you that don't know what's happening, like A minor seventh flat five -- like unless you know a little bit about chords, like, it doesn't mean anything to you. But Lida knows and so when I said A -- C minus six, she thought for a moment -- Ah, see? That's the different way of looking at A minor seventh flat five chord because it gives it another sound. That's the way he always looked at it, you know. And as far as like different things that we used to do -- I remember I, like, used to be bothered being on airplanes. And we were on this little plane and I had Dizzy's hand and I was holding his hand and [laughs] Dizzy -- I'm gonna have to say it exactly like he said it. I was holding his hand, and he said, "Nigger, turn my hand

loose. You gonna -- look at my nasty hand." [laughs] I damn near squeeze (indiscernible) boy. But we laugh about that boy, cause I had it -- you know, because we were on this little plane and he says, "Hold my hand" and I says okay and I suppose then he had to tell me that [laughs] you know? That was one thing, you know. Then, like, he -- you know, he would -- he dug Linda, you know. He loved Linda, boy, and I don't know if he said it. Did he say that to you honey? He said, "Moody, you made a wonderful choice. Ah, it's wonderful." Then he looked at her and says "Sorry I can't say the same for you." [laughs]. You know, that Dizzy boy. Dizzy and me -- lots of things. I know he told me always "Look at the piano. That's where it is." You know. And he -- you know what? When we went to -- me and Michael Lungo (phonetic sp.) -- we went over the Luane's (phonetic sp.) to help her sort out and do this stuff and there was a little piece of paper there and on it there was two notes written and on it was a new way to play. Dizzy put it down and evidently he was going to do that. You know, this new way to play. There were fourth there. He was -- so that -- and Dizzy would like -- we'd be sitting in an airport and -- I've got a hat upstairs and in the hat he'd put "To my best friend, Moody." You know. He give me a hat as a gift or a pen. I've got a hell of a pen -- what the name of that pen, honey?

Baker: It's a European pen. It's sterling silver.

Moody: Yeah. See, you know, he -- you know. CIE that whatever it is. That, you know, that was Dizzy, you know? And then [laughs] another time he had a old beat up flute and I was playing the flute and I loaned it to somebody and Dizzy said "Where's my flute?" I said, Oh I gave it -- "What?" And he wigged out, you know. I said I'll get it, I'll get it, I'll get it. You know, I got his flute and he said "Okay. Thanks." He took it and gave it somebody else. [laughs] You know. He was funny. Then another time I gave his number to somebody. He said, what? Oh, he wigged out about that. I said okay. I said, now remember what you said here. I said, because when Jesus comes and asks me for your phone number, I'm not giving it to him, nah. I'll fix your -- you know. He said all right, you know. We had good times together. Yeah. We used to drink together. [laughs] Ah man. Then he used to duck -- he didn't want me to see him drinking, but you could tell it.

Baker: Cause you had stopped, right?

Moody: Oh yeah. Yeah. But it was -- Oh, we had a hell of a night in, in Tokyo because me, Michael Lungo, him, and Oliver Nelson (phonetic sp.) all was lit with the sake. And then he says, for the people, you know, for all the people in Japan, he says "I know what I'm gonna do." He says, "I'm gonna tell them that I thought it was tea." Man, how come you think -- you can play some people for that like being that much of a fool? They ain't gonna -- you know what sake is, you know. But, boy, Oliver Nelson came with this big bottle of sake and we kept waiting to play and man, next thing you know, man, I was in bed and so was Mike. Michael was in bed and neither one of us know how we got to our rooms. [laughs] I don't like that feeling, like that. That's why I don't touch it. I like getting old man, you know? It's always best if you wanna get them stimulated -- be stimulated from music or books or something. But that false stimulation from alcohol or cigarettes or reefer or cocaine or any other kind of drug is stupid. And it's too bad that people don't realize -- that they think that they're -- did you ever see people, man, like they're drinking and you say, oh man, and they says oh man. And you say, damn. And then you take a drink and next time they say oh man, you say, yeah oh man. And both of you all

together, you know, two damn fools, you know. Man, I'm gonna stop this crap. So, stay away from the alcohol. Stay away from the stimulants other than educational stimulus, you know, audio stimulant, you know, beautiful music, you know. And learn how to educate yourself a little bit by listening to better music. And you know what better music usually is? Music that you don't like.

Baker: That's an interesting point.

Moody: You know what I'm saying? Oh yeah.

Baker: For example, in your own case, what would you --

Moody: Well, if you don't like something, the reason you don't like it is because you either don't understand it or there's something there that's an obstacle for you, you know? Because if you understand something then it's easy, isn't it? Okay? So, if you hear something and you don't like it, check it out first. Check everything out about it. Learn it. Then if you still don't like it, you've got a license to say you don't like it. Just like people -- The Bible isn't true, right? Have you ever read The Bible? No. I never read it, but it's -- man wrote it. I mean, well, do you know anything? Well, yeah. They say in The Bible that, that -- they don't know. So how can you criticize something if you don't know about it? See?

Baker: Which brings me to another point, which actually I was going to ask later on, but this might be a good time to look at it. So many of the critics, European and American both, that wrote about jazz were not people who had firsthand experience with the music. They weren't musicians for the most part and -- what have you felt about what people have written about your musical performances and what have you over the years? What was your feeling about American and European critics in terms of what they said about what you were doing or what was happening in the music at a time when you were very knowledgeable about it?

Moody: Well, I don't -- first of all, they're critics, but there are critics and then there are critics. Now, just because a person can play an instrument -- that doesn't mean that they can say what's good and what isn't because I don't care who it is. All I can do is give you an opinion as to what I think and what I think isn't necessarily right.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But also what I think isn't necessarily wrong, you know, because there are a lot of people -- you see? There's some critics who play or there's some musicians who play and there are other musicians who play a little more, a little more knowledgeable than they are and they play that way. Now, how can you take a person that plays an instrument and then they're gonna tell you that what this person played isn't too good because they don't particularly care for it? You see? Now, I feel that I can -- that I have a license to say that -- like say a group like Rush? That group? Like, I don't like what they play. And the reason I don't like what they play is because I don't hear any music there, okay? All I hear are a lot of falsetto stuff and some lyrics. What's the matter is a hill of beans to me, you know, because I want to hear some music, all right? So, now, because I feel this way, that doesn't mean that they like, they work all the time

and they make thousands and thousands upon dollars because other people think it's the goodest thing that there is. You know what I mean? So, could it -- I would look at it this way. If I were going to criticize something, I'd say well, that's not my cup of tea, I don't like it and here's the reason I don't like it -- because -- and then I could say, well first of all, with Rush, they play two chords in one position and on top of that they sing these sad behind melodies, you know, that don't amount to a hill of beans, all right? So, now, when I criticize something, I'm saying something. But, I don't say, like some critics say, well, so-and-so play a saxophone, but he's no John Coltraine. I mean, that's not explaining anything. He's no Sonny Rollins (phonetic sp.) or he doesn't -- just because of that, that doesn't mean -- like take, take Kenny G, okay? Kenny G? He's a nice saxophone player. He's okay. I mean, and he sounds nice. But I know a lot of people that I would prefer to hear if I were gonna listen to learn something because I want to hear something with some substance to it, more substance. But because of him playing what he's playing, that doesn't mean that it isn't valid and it's not okay. It's okay, you know. But there's much, much more and the critics, like the ones that think that they have a good ear -- they've got to remember that musicians, they are the ones with the ears and they are the ones that should be singing. Just like, you know, people say, why do musicians think they can sing? Because they're the true singers, really. I was cracking up because you get somebody, like a singer says, [scatting] 'how high the moon', and then they point at the saxophone player, you got it. Well, if you a jazz singer, you supposed to go ahead and scat some on that, I mean, you're the singer, you know. Or they point at the piano player. I mean, let's sing. Now, Ella Fitzgerald is good at it. She can sing at it, you know, but it's very rare that you hear people -- I heard Betty Carter just recently in Belgium and Antwerp and she sang giant steps. I said, okay Betty. Go it on girl, you know, all right. You know she [scats], you know, [scats], you know, [scats] -- but it was nice because that's the beginning, you know. [Scats]

Baker: She did this?

Moody: [Scats] No. She didn't do that, but she was singing and just, you know.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But the musicians, like, you know, [Scats] I thought I heard something there, you know. But anyway, you know what I mean.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But why did I get off on that? Oh, the critic. So, as far as the critics are concerned, for me, most critics don't know anything about what's they're listening to. Only they're doing environmental listening.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: And by that I mean they listen to people that are supposed to be or so-called good and they say okay, you good, he good, okay, so then this must be good. So that's good. You know what I mean? What?

Baker: I was worried about the lawn mower. I didn't know if that was picking up.

Moody: Yeah, for a critic, they -- I don't particularly -- I don't think one way or the other. I just try to do the best I can playing. That's all. Because, you see, here's something the critic missed out on. They hear a person playing, say, this year and then they hear a person playing the next year and the person is improved, so they know that has happened? And if they did know that it happened, how come they can't say, well, he's trying to improve and he's getting honest with what he's doing and in these days honestly isn't too prevalent, so like, the guy -- I've got to give the guy credit. You know what I am trying to say?

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: You know what I'm saying.

Baker: I know exactly what you're saying.

Moody: Yeah. So, like I've -- first of all, I don't think anyone can tell me how to play what I play. I think they can tell me what to play to get better, but if I'm gonna express myself I can only do it the way I do it. Now, if you want to help me to show me the other words I can use, I'll accept that and I'll go, you know. But, you know, a lot of people that do that and try to hip you to something, but they can't tell you how to do it better. No one other than another musician, you see what I mean? Cause -- then the other people, they, Ah man, I like him better. Why? I don't know. I just like it. Well, that's a good explanation, right? I don't know. I just like it.

Baker: Right. Right.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: And sort of along the same lines, I'd love to get your opinion about all these various polls that have been set up over the years -- this guy is the best saxophonist of 1956 and this guy is, you know, this is the top record of 19 -- top jazz record of 1964. The polls, you know, there was the Critics poll for years with downbeat and the Reader's pool and Metronome had a pool and --

Moody: You know what I always say?

Baker: I was kind of curious as to what your opinion was about all that.

Moody: Always like to say and I've always said the best has yet to be heard. That's one of my sayings that I've always said because, you know, there are a lot of guys sitting in the corner and on the shelf in different places that can play their buns off. Guys and girls. And you don't hear them, you know. But the polls are the people and people vote for who they want to vote for and that's it.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: And then there's the critics who vote. So, there you go. What do people know and what do critics know? They know what they like and that's who they vote for.

Baker: Was that ever meaningful to you when you won the polls?

Moody: Well, to be perfectly honest with you, I said, oh, they like that? Jeez, thanks. You know?

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But they -- they can vote for me and say something, but I hear people I like better than myself so if it was up to me -- Who did we vote for honey? Didn't we vote for someone? We voted for some people. Didn't we vote for who?

LINDA: Oh, in the Reader's poll?

Moody: Yeah.

LINDA: We voted for Slide (phonetic sp.).

Moody: We voted for Slide? Did we vote for Section (phonetic sp.)? We voted for Section.

LINDA: Yes we did.

Moody: You know, Antonio Heart (phonetic sp.), David Sanchez, you know what I mean? You know. I know some people that vote for themselves. No, no I didn't vote. Nah man.
[laughter]

Baker: Once of the things I've really been looking forward to asking you is who were some of your favorite musicians that you worked with over the years.

Moody: All of them.

Baker: Because you've worked with great --

Moody: All of them.

Baker: -- great players.

Moody: All of them. Like, you know, Dizzy, Slide, Section, you know. You know. One of my favorite educators is your husband, David, because I got all my stuff out of his books, you know? Not only that, but he'd send me things and I really appreciate it. Everybody. That's the thing. With music, anyone that has to do with what you do is -- you're gonna listen to it. Because as soon as you hear a song [sings] -- Oh, okay, yeah. All right. I can be talking and if I hear some music I, oh yeah, yeah. But I hear, you know, what's going on, the note, the whatever it is, I hear because, like, I'm just tuned to that, you know. And anything -- if there's anything I hate worse is

to be listening to something and somebody is humming along with it. I hate that with a passion. If I hear [scats] I'm ah man, but somebody's [scats], say Ah, gee. Will you shut up and let me -- [scats]. Let me listen. I wanna hear, you know. Because, and people miss out when they do that. If I hear something and I start humming with it, I miss a lot of stuff that's coming from it because other people like the sounds or maybe the harmony might go another way. I wanna hear it. Because that's what music is; listening. Not singing and listening, you know. Sing-a-longs are for sing-a-longs, you know.

Baker: What players do you feel like you learned from.

Moody: All of them. Everybody. You take the worst player in the world; you can learn something from him. You take one of the best players; you can learn something from them too. And from the worst you can learn some things to do and not to do. And from the best to do and not to do.

Baker: For example, what do you feel like you learned from Dizzy?

Moody: Well, Dizzy used to say, "Moody, after all these years I learned what note to leave out." You know? He -- and believe it or not, I played with Dizzy long enough to hear him do certain things and know about where he put certain things, you know. I heard that. So it's good. You know, you can't -- maybe you could explain out to someone, but I heard it, you know, and it's good -- like I'm discovering things. Like say, a thing that I discovered and it might seem irrelevant, but to me it's a big discovery. Like you take the harmonic minor scale and say [sings], okay? And you say [sings], you know what I'm saying? Okay. Johnny Mendel (phonetic sp.) wrote that song "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?" and like doing that I say, ah. He started on the third of the harmonic minor. [sings], you know? And just little things like that and it seems like a little thing, but to me it's a big thing because I'm finding a little fragments of things that happen and eventually you put them all together and it's gonna be a big bonanza, you know? Then, Dizzy, like I said before, always the piano. Always know the chain, know what it is because everything is there. I said, okay, you know. And listen, listen. That right there has a whole lot to do with music, listen. I remember I was doing a -- was going to do an album and the record guy told me, he says, "Yeah, I want so-and-so to produce it for you." I said, why? And he said, "Because he's got good ears." Well, what have I got?

[laughter]

I've been doing it for nine thousand years -- how about my ears? Anyway.

Baker: Boy, that's another whole area.

Moody: Tell me about it.

Baker: All the years you worked with all these different record companies, producers --

Moody: Blessed are those that run around in circles, for they shall be called big wheels.

[laughter]

I say that all the time too. Because it's the truth, you know? I know a lot of things I say is repetitive, but man, that's where the satellite is. I mean, it's always some guy that doesn't know

his butt from a hole in the ground who is the head of something and he got people working for him who know a little bit about this thing to keep his butt above water, you know? Because, I mean, he himself, he doesn't, you know. So -- and that's the way the world is in the government and everywhere, you know. That's why I say, everything has to do with -- you go anywhere and people doing everything that they do, they don't know what they're doing. Their education sucks because they didn't learn crap, you know. Now, you might find a few who might know, but they're far and in between. Most people don't know their jobs, man.

Baker: When did you start singing? Because you're not only one of my favorite players, you're also one of my favorite singers.

Moody: Well, I'm not a singer, but I'm gonna start trying to sing some songs. I never will forget I was telling him, I said, I'm gonna sing. He said, "Moody, but you can't sing because you have a lisp and everything and I --

Baker: Who told you that?

Moody: Oh, Hessew (phonetic sp.). He was Book Benton's (phonetic sp.) piano and director, you know, and he had a visit with his company and told me, "yeah, see, because you got this lisp." And I said, well, in that case, I'm not supposed to be married or have any love life or anything of that thought because I'm not tall, dark, handsome, and I oh - you know what I'm saying? Ah man, people are full to doodoo.

Baker: [laughs] When did you make your first professional appearance singing? Was it when you did --

Moody: Oh, I have no idea.

Baker: Was it when you started doing Eddie Jefferson's version of --

Moody: No, no, no, no. I'd been with --

Baker: Earlier, yeah.

Moody: -- with Dizzy. We used to sing [sings]--

Baker: The Umbrella Van. Yeah.

Moody: [Sings] You know.

Baker: The whole band would sing, right?

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: [Sings] 'any umbrellas to fix today,' You know. And in that end they'd go [sings]. Oh, it was hip man. Yeah.

Baker: So, in that band, on a lot of the tunes --

Moody: Oh and then --

Baker: -- the band sang --

Moody: -- and then Dizzy'd say [sings], you know.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: So, like, I wanted another singer. I said, well I'm not gonna go through that crap any more.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: So I said, let me see 'there I go, there I go, there I' I just sang "There I Go" so there I went.

Baker: [laughs] When did you get the idea to -- one of the things I love about your performances is that you're a very serious person about music, but you also love your audience and you always have wonderful little stories to tell the audience and I was wondering if that came from Dizzy's influence or if that was something you've always felt yourself.

Moody: You know what, it seems like it loosens the audience up a little bit. It seems that way and maybe they'll accept what you're trying to do.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: I mean, there's a little larceny there, maybe, you know. A little, like spiritual larceny, you know, maybe.

Baker: [laughs].

Moody: Maybe, I don't know. So --

Baker: Larceny. That's --

Moody: So that's the reason, you know, that's one reason -- because sometimes I don't feel like saying anything because it would be so nice to just be able to say [sings] and people say yeah. You know. Because that's really what I'm there for; I want to play.
[crew talk]

Moody: Okay, spiritual larceny. That means I'm there to play music, but then you feel if you

maybe try to -- maybe the same way Bill Cosby said, like the guy there that they want to kick behind, but if you made him laugh they would feel better. So, it's the same way. People probably want to choke if you're playing what your playing, but if they laugh a little bit they might accept it better. Could you call that spiritual larceny? I think you could to a certain extent, right?

Baker: Well, you always made the audience feel so warm towards you. And then, of course, you have a couple of stories that always have a wonderful twist. I'll never forget the night that you told the Cherokee story --

Moody: Oh --

Baker: -- I always look forward to that. And there are other ones, you know, that the audience just loves and then it puts everybody in a great mood --

Moody: Oh yeah --

Baker: -- and then you play Invitation and everybody's yours for the rest of the night.

Moody: Well, hopefully, yeah, but that -- it's like sometimes I enjoy doing it and then sometimes I don't feel like talking, you know.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: I really appreciate when people come because when they do come, like you feel like you're responsible for doing what you have to do for them. And they came to listen to you and you always want to do your best. And that's what I always do. And most of all, I always try to be honest about what I'm playing. That -- and in doing that -- see, because there are a lot of albums that I've made that nobody, like, they don't play them or anything. But one of these days when they start playing some of the albums that I've made other than the old (indiscernible) things, people are gonna say, oh, wait a minute, that wasn't bad. And they say, oh, wait a minute, because I've got a lot of albums with some nice things on there, nice arrangements, nice -- I mean, just nice music and it wasn't really accepted, you know. So --
[crew talk]

Baker: One of the things I've always admired about you so much is your ability to play well on all the different instruments. And I think there's a wonderful story behind you getting your first flute that I would love for people to know about.

Moody: Oh, I was in Chicago and -- well first of all, before I go there, I was in Detroit one time and we were up at this club where they jammed and Brother Yusef (phonetic sp.) was playing. I forget the name of the club now. And so he was playing flute --

Baker: You're talking about Yusef Latiffe (phonetic sp.)?

Moody: Yeah, Brother Yusef Latiffe. Yeah. I'm sorry. So, he -- during an intermission he

said, "Try it." And I picked the flute and I didn't like it. Didn't like it. Couldn't use it. So later on, I was in Chicago -- this is a month after -- and I was drinking a little bit and this guy came up and wanted to sell me a flute, you know. So I think I paid something like thirty bucks for this flute. I didn't even have any money with me because I didn't carry it. Hey, Eddie, you got thirty dollars? Yeah. So I took it and I gave him and I bought this flute. Like oh, I don't know, maybe about two or three months later I made flute (indiscernible). [laughs]

Baker: And it was a hot flute too, from what I understand, right?

Moody: Well, I didn't want to say that.
[laughter]

Baker: Sorry. [laughs]. So, we want to cut that. We wanna cut -- and then clarinet, because I know you've fallen in love with the clarinet again. How did you get started playing the clarinet?

Moody: Las Vegas. [laughs]

Baker: When you had to?

Moody: Yeah. In Vegas. They told, they said, they said -- I said, I don't play clarinet and Jimmy Molodor (phonetic sp.) says, "Yes you do." I said, but I don't. He says, "Yes you do." I said, I don't. He said, Yes. I said oh, okay. So that's why I started really with the clarinet.

Baker: So you had to buy a clarinet then and --

Moody: I had to buy a clarinet and learn it and boy, sucking, and squeaking, and squawking and oh man.

LINDA: Tell them the story about the penny in the --

Moody: Ah, yeah. We -- when we opened up in, at Lesley Elgams (phonetic sp.) I think we were playing and there was a -- Oh no. It was Sandler and Young (phonetic sp.) and they opened up with a thing called a street scene [sings]. And it opened up with this thing was on clarinet and I blew in the clarinet and nothing came out. And I was like, oh my. Perspiration was popping out on my head, you know, and I didn't realize it, but just Jimmy Molodor was standing off on the side dying laughing because he had put a penny in the thing, you know. Everybody in the band knew except me. He died, you know. I damn near died.
[laughter]

But anyway -- and you know what? As strange as it seems, six and a half years later when I left Vegas, the last show I played was Sandler and Young. And I played that same thing, Duck Soup [sings] and I just thought back and isn't that something, you know. But man, it was, you know, like there was [sings] and it seemed like everything in Vegas was in E, B, C sharp [laughs]. That's why all those singers --

Baker: On the string keys --

Moody: -- they all sang -- yeah. But it was fine. So now, like, I'm really crazy about the instrument, only because I got a new mouthpiece from Ralph Morgan (phonetic sp.) and I put it on and said oh man. Because Linda even says, honey, it doesn't squeak like it used to [laughs]. You know. I said, oh, okay. Then Eddie Daniels (phonetic sp.) -- I saw him in France and he gave me a lesson and I said, oh, okay. Like I said before, when I hear him I didn't fool with it at all, but you know how it is, man, that's music, you know. I figure well, just gimme a little time and I'll learn how to play a few things on it that I want, you know.

Baker: Do you find yourself, when you switch between alto and tenor, flute, clarinet, do you find that you play differently conceptually in terms of what you hear to play or do you find that pretty much the same material that you like to use when your playing one goes across to the other?

Moody: Well, what I like to do is, is to be able to play everything that I play on one instrument, be able to play them on all of them, but what happens is, you know, music is sound.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: So, when you hear sound, like it puts you in different moods. So if I pick up an alto, it's a different sound from a tenor.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: Or clarinet is a different sound from the flute or the flute is a different sound so consequently I find myself thinking another way on each instrument because one thing will sound one way on flute but it sounds another way on tenor --

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: And vice versa, you know. So, it depends -- but the point is, is I just want to be able to learn the flute and be able to play it, you know, like I can kind of play my saxophone, you know. And I would like to be able to play the clarinet like that and I want to play the saxophone better too, you know, and that comes from practice.

Baker: When you started on alto, who were some of the people -- You like Jimmy Dorsey (phonetic sp.). I remember you said that. Were there other players beside Jimmy Dorsey and Charlie Parker who were influences on you?

Moody: Charlie Parker was the last one I heard. That's why when I heard him, that was it. That was it, yeah. But there was a guy by the name of Rudy Williams (phonetic sp.) who played with the Savoy Salton (phonetic sp.) and he was from Newark. There was, I mean, there was like Tab Smith (phonetic sp.) with Count Bassie, but I, you know, like I kind of narrowed it down because all these guys they play nice saxophone, but that wasn't the way I wanted to play. Like Bill Bostic (phonetic sp.). Did you know that Bill Bostic was a better saxophonist than Charlie Parker?

Baker: No --

Moody: They say, like, they say he was the better saxophonist, like he knew the instrument better, but I didn't like his -- the way he played, you know? I like Charlie Parker (indiscernible), you see? And there are a lot of people, you know, they know the instrument better than someone, but another person plays his better.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: Like, man, I dug Lester Young (phonetic sp.), but Harper (phonetic sp.) played more changes, but I did that [sings], but man, that Harper [sings], he was whipping in between those changes. But see, that's, that's the thing. You have to live and learn and find out because the things that you think are great today like won't be too cool tomorrow. There's always something a little better, you know, if you're looking in the right direction, you know. But things that -- you know, there's always something better if you're looking for something to grow with. When you have a relationship with your wife, you make that grow and make that better tomorrow, you see, rather than thinking, well, now I'll find something better tomorrow. It doesn't do that way.

Baker: When you were a young player coming up and you were listening to other players and listening to recordings of other players, did you also have the opportunity to go to jam sessions and try to learn that way as well?

Moody: No. We -- I didn't go to jam sessions because in the first place, don't forget, when I was coming up there weren't as many musicians as there are now, I don't think.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: I don't there were, you know, and there weren't that many people playing then. So, and there weren't that many books, I mean. There might have been a lot of books because I didn't start seeing them until later, you know, but -- so, my way of coming up was much, much different. It wasn't -- we had little jam sessions, but they didn't amount to a hill of beans, I don't think.

Baker: Because it sounds like the older players weren't really altogether than helpful --

Moody: Well, it wasn't the point of being helpful. It's just that the older players didn't know that much either.

Baker: Ah --

Moody: If you just look at it and look at it, the older players, like, you know, like Coleman Harkins (phonetic sp.), Ben West (phonetic sp.) and all they -- but all the other people like -- I don't think they were too, too familiar with scales and things.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: You know? I don't think so. I think the younger musician of today is more aware musically and has more knowledge musically now than when I was coming up.

Baker: So did you mostly have to learn by listening to recordings and then trying to figure out -
-

Moody: That's what I did.

Baker: -- what they were playing?

Moody: I would listen to something, you know --

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: -- and just keep listening and listening and it would get in my ear and I would try to do it on my own, something like that.

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But, then again, you stop and you think, well, Wayne Shorty (phonetic sp.), he's from Newark. How did he find out about music? You see, from being at a certain place at a certain time. Now, if you don't know something and you have to ask something about it, what do you ask? See, if, if I don't know anything about music, but I want to learn music, who do I ask and where do I go? So you ask the person standing next -- where can I learn music? And most of the time whoever I was talking to, they didn't know anything about it either, you know. So, because I went to high school. I want to learn music because the school for the arts, the painters and things, you know. So, I'm wondering when -- how did he know? Because he studied. I think he went to Juilliard or something. I don't know if he did, but I'm wondering how did all this happen, you know? Because it seems like I just didn't know where to go to ask for certain things. And the people I asked, they didn't know either, you know. I mean, not a drag, but there are a lot of older guys who were like, you know, some of them they pretend that they know when they don't. They only know so much, you know.

Baker: You're one player that I found that's so open to what's happening with the younger players coming up and you're always trying to give people an opportunity, younger player an opportunity. Who are some of the young up and coming players of this time that you think we should be looking --

Moody: Oh. Blanchet (phonetic sp.), Antonio Heart (phonetic sp.), little -- what's the guys name, honey, the little kid in Telluride? His mother and father live here?

LINDA: Brian Lent (phonetic sp.).

Moody: Brian Lent --

LINDA: David Sanchez (phonetic sp.).

Moody: -- David Sanchez, you know. And those are only the guys that I know of. There are other guys -- there are guys in Switzerland that I heard. I don't know their names, but I mean -- they -- all over the world musicians are there. Because, first of all, the Berkley School of Music, you know, David Baker (phonetic sp.), your husband, and Jimmy Anbesol (phonetic sp.) they go from different places and people are more aware, the musicians, about music. So you can't go anywhere and be BSing and talk about [sings] -- now that's the blues licks. Nobody wanna hear that clapping, you know, like, hey man, people know (indiscernible) from scales and you know. Remember I was there and David was showing from what scale certain things come from and you start on this note and that note. Man, they don't want to hear [sings]. Yeah, well, where does it come from? It comes from a scale. But most cats don't know -- they get a lick and that's it. So, the older guys -- and one of the older guys, though, that, that keeps moving along with the time is Hal, you know, Hal Lan (phonetic sp.)?

Baker: Hal Lan. Yeah.

Moody: Hal wants to, you know, Hal always -- but a lot of older guys, man, they're satisfied, I think, o just stay the way they are, man, and I don't think that's too good. That's not conducive to learning, I don't think. And I never forget, when I was young I heard some of the older guys say, the young guys play too many notes. And man, a young musician is just like a young colt who's running and jumping, doing what he feels like he wants to do and you shouldn't stifle that. You should let him go ahead and do it, you know, because eventually he's gonna know what to leave out or what to put in. If you show him the music, you know, because the way I was taught, people say, I say, I want to learn music. People said, then go learn it. See? But for me, somebody says, I want to learn music, I say, well come here man, let me show you. Do you know what a note is? Well, no. Okay, well here. Here's a staff. You show them from the beginning. And I can hear people play and I get an idea about some thing that they know and then I said, oh, okay, now play this or that. Oh, all right. You don't know the scales. I can tell that. Well, I used to know them, but I -- you don't used to know doodoo, like you don't know them. I mean, you know. Okay, here's what you do. But people think there's some magic formula to playing jazz and the magic formula is knowing your roadmap, which are the scales. You get those scales down and know from what different things come from and how, like, you apply things, then you get the different book and you know, hey man, there's no better help than that. Then go and try to apply it then. That's where the fun is. And that's just the tip of the iceberg because there's so much more there. Like Coltraine did, you know, with his -- with that giant thing, you know [sings]. No, put minor third, minor fifth or something. If you did that now, something else is going to come along because, like, well first of all, he was a hell of a saxophonist. So some people can do that and if they want to go somewhere or -- they gonna have to play things another way. So what other way are they gonna play it? Another way that somebody didn't think of, but as soon as you do it somebody's, Ah, that's right. Yeah. Right? So that's what every musician should be striving for. To try to look for another way to play something rather than copying all the time. But at the beginning you copy and then after that you go for yourself.

Baker: Well, along that same line, I know some of the books have said that when the young

players of your generation came along and when bebop came into flower, that a lot of the older musicians didn't really like what was going on.

Moody: No. I've heard musicians say, well you know Dizzy capitalizes on his mistakes. Say all he's doing is make a mistake and he make a -- he capitalizes on that. So how do you talk to somebody who says that? You don't say anything. You say, there's an old saying. Don't woke em, let em slept, you know? So, you know, the guy -- all he knows is a flat five. [sings] you know? [sings]. Where does it comes from? What does it do? And what else can you do? And I -- you know what? I make you a bet. I could a lot of so-called older guys and ask them to play the major scales grammatically up and grammatically down and I bet a lot of them wouldn't be able to do it.

Baker: Really?

Moody: I'm just -- I'm just assuming that --

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: -- because the way sometimes you hear something being played and you just assume that --

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: -- you know. You know. You know, some of the, you know, like Sonny Rollins (phonetic sp.), those kind of guys? Ah man, you know they know. You could tell. But a lot of the older guys, they're content to just stay with what they do, you know, and -- and what it's doing is just not helping them, you know? Because like, the more you learn, the more you let the young kid know that you don't know that, the better it is for you. I told Antonio Heart, I said, Antonio, man, I wish I could write. He says, man, I'm starting with Jimmy and with Chuck, you know, and he says, here's what he showed me. Look. You know, and then after that I came and I called David and David sent me a book on the way, you know what I mean? Man. Because -- now I could've kept my mouth shut and think that perhaps that he think that I know more than what I know. Who's it hurting? Me. I mean, I don't want nobody to think, oh yeah, he knows. No, man, you know. I want to know what I'm knowing and if I don't know and you know, show me. I'm the damn hooyah. Do you know Bernard? You show me, you know, show me. And it's doesn't make any difference if it's a baby. You learn something from it. And in music, like, just because a guy is young and you're older, that doesn't mean that he doesn't know as much music as you, you know, because he can and know much more. And so if you hear something that he does and you get an inkling of it and you do, man, ask. Because I'll ask in a minute, man. Just hold it right there. Linda's heard me -- Like David Sanchez. I said, hold it David. What was that? You know what? It was (indiscernible). And I have him write it down. Yeah. Him and anybody else. And you better not play some because if you do, then hold it right there, Lida, what is that.

Baker: Just like you wrote that one down for me this morning along with the flat fives and every --

Moody: Well, that's what music is. Swap. Music is one big swap meet.

Baker: One of the things I'm most interested in is because you've had so many experiences in the development of the music over the last 40 years. What kinds of things would you like, personally as a musician, to be remembered for? When people go up into the Smithsonian and they're listening to these tapes and they are making notes about your contributions and historically the things that you've done, what things would you like them to remember about what you thought was important about your life?

Moody: Well, the first thing I'd have to do is I'd have to go back and say -- one of the things I would like for people to do first, before they start remembering, is for the disc jockeys to play my current albums and play the current albums and go back down rather than play the first album that I ever did and come up, which they usually do. Whenever I go to a city and they're playing anything that I did, they're playing things that I recorded back when I first was with Chess (phonetic sp.) records and Argo (phonetic sp.) records and they're playing the things that, I mean, they're me --

Baker: Um-hmm.

Moody: But it's me like 35, 40 years ago, you know. And I wish that they would play the more current things so people can see that I am trying to practice and I'm trying to improve my musicianship. Now, for here, what I would like people to remember me by is that I always tried to be honest musically. By saying being honest musically -- I didn't play to satisfy people. I played to try to satisfy myself musically, which I never do, but I try to and then that way, with myself, I'm being honest and I'm giving you the best that I can give you. Also, I would like people to know that, like I tried to have love in my heart and I would like for it to come through the music. Like I told me wife, Linda, the first time I ever hugged her and kissed, I said, I hope she felt the love coming from me, you know, because that's what I had in my heart rather than lust because that's not what was there. And what was so nice about it, she says, I felt it honey. I felt it, you know. So, it's like -- I would like people to know, like, I want to become more spiritually aware of what's going on. My wife and I, we're looking for that together. A more -- a better spiritual relationship because that's the kind that really matters and grows. And also, I would like for people to know that I am supposedly of another race, but me, myself, I love the supposedly all other races. But as far as I'm concerned, it's stupid to say that there are different races because there's only one race -- I think I said this yesterday -- and it's the human race, okay, and with that, like, I would like for people to know that I don't go along with all the profanity that's being said on TV now. This is 1993. I don't go along with a lot of the idiots in the music and TV and a lot of the things that they call music that aren't -- that isn't music. Because I think I said yesterday that melody to harmony and rhythm, that makes music. Rhythm alone isn't music. Rap is rhyming and rhyming is something back in the forties. When I was going to dances they would play records and, you know, the guy would -- he had a thing to play and he had all the latest records that came out and he would play these records and people would dance and in the corner there would always be a guy and we used to call him the rapper. And he would be rapping about -- he would have some thing that he made up. 'John come on down and run on

line, take (indiscernible),' you know what I mean about some -- So, I mean, it's nice for people to be able to do that, but anybody can rhyme and some can rhyme better than others. And since some people do poetry, between poetry and rhyming, okay? So, now, if you do that, that doesn't mean that that's music because I can say 'My funny valentine, my favorite valentine, you make me smile when you are gray.' Okay? That's not music. When I say, 'My funny valentine, sweet comic valentine' that's a melody. Now the [sings] -- there's some harmony to it now and there's a rhythm there. Now, that's music, okay? But just the 'my funny valentine, my comic valentine, you make me smile when you,' that isn't music. So that turns everything else now, people wanna tell me I'm corny, I'm square, then so be it. I'd rather be that way than to be like indulging in something that's tearing me down rather than building me up. And it's a damn shame that all these things on TV, radio, all forms of public communication supposedly -- and the kids are listening to this doodoo. Because like, they should be listening to something that will make them grow spiritually and all otherwise, okay? But this way, anything that you hear of that nature, a lot of it is nothing but a tear down, as far as I'm concerned. You see? Like, we know the world is messed up. Not the world, but the people in the world. So let's do something to help them become un-messed up. Because you can say, oh, it's a bad day. It's raining. Oh look, it's raining and the sun's not shining, isn't shining, oh it's a drag. And I'm with you there. It's a bad day. The sun isn't shining. Oh isn't it a bad day? Oh yeah, the sun's -- how come you can't be the one to say, yeah, it might be bad, but the sun will be here tomorrow and then don't forget, with the rain, it makes the flowers grow and the trees and the clouds are doing certain things for the thing and that's why it looks like -- it's a beautiful day, you know. Think of the people who would love to be here just for five minutes on this day who are not here.

Baker: Yes.

Moody: You see? So, I mean all this thing about I'm this, you're that, they're that, and those are these and these are them and those are that and because of that we're all different. Remember the saying, divide and conquer and that's what's being done, you see. People are making -- people hate each other, you know, because the more you hate each other the more empowered and more empowerment it gives me and the more I can control you, you know. And while I'm at it, I'd like to say that the government is a vacuum. And by that I mean it sucks and it sucks because it lies about everything. Every time you get someone now like Clinton, he, President Clinton, like plays the saxophone a little bit so he'll probably maybe, like, have a tendency to go a little more towards the music or something of that nature. But still in all, you know when you play music you have to be honest too about things. And if I say I'm gonna play this song because you wrote it and because I like the song, I'm not going to play the song because you gave me 50 percent of it and now I'm gonna do it. And that's what the government is. That's what all governments are, you know. Instead of giving something that's right for the people, what they do is they say okay, I'll do this, but I have to get something in return. If you don't give me something in return I'm not gonna do it. So where does that leave -- if a person is on the ground dying and you're gonna stand over them and say, well, now, I can pick him up, but it'll cost you ten dollars because I've got to pay this guy and that's the way the governments are. And when I say they lie, that's what I mean by saying they lie. And I'm sick of the lying. That's why my wife tells me, honey, kiss me, you know, the kiss, that means my mouth is shut.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: But I'm so sick of it. Just lies, lies, lies. And the same in music. Lies, lies, lies. And you know something? The best musicians, the greatest ones, like, they're the ones that catch more hell than anybody else because in the first place when people are trying to take something and do something with it, people, they don't understand that. Remember yesterday I said, "America, the land of mediocrity." You know, give me something that's dumb and stupid so I can shake my booty and get with it, you know. Ought to get with something that has some substance to it, you know, like some good music. Because if you have any intelligence at all, you can shake your booty to good music too and be learning something and have less fights. You know, because as soon as you hear [sings] let's knock somebody out. Let's mess up somebody. You get jazz, man, ah man, let's groove, you know. So, anyway.

Baker: Along those same lines, what would you like to tell the aspiring young musicians who are coming up now, who can learn from the musical and personal experiences that you've had over the years? Do you have some advice you'd like to leave for them --

Moody: Yes.

Baker: -- as musicians?

Moody: Sure. The first musician that comes up and says, do you think I can make it as a musician? Forget it. Don't play. If you have to go and ask somebody if they think you can make it as a musician, then you shouldn't play. I never had to ask anyone because all I wanted to do was play. I didn't care, come hell or high water, that's what I wanted to do. So if you want to play music, don't ask anyone if they think you can make in music because they're not God. If you want to do something, you can do it. So you go ahead and do it, you see? And that's how things happen, you know, like people discover things because people tell them, you can't do that. As soon as you tell me I can't do something, that's immediately what I'm gonna do, you know, just to show you it can be done. So don't ask anybody whether or not you can play music and don't -- the easiest instrument to learn is the one you want to learn. The hardest instrument to learn is the one you don't want to learn, okay? So if you want to play music and it's in your heart, do it. That's my advice. Don't ask what -- not only for music, for anything. Don't ask anyone if they think you can do something. If you want to do something, do it.

Baker: Well, that really boils it right down to the essence.

Moody: Yeah. Sure, because you have people, you know, you have even people --

[Begin CD-4]

Moody: -- and in front of someone and say, "Now this is difficult" and blah, blah, blah, blah, and then go ahead and then not -- the student is saying, "Oh, my God." They're looking for something, you know, even though it isn't there. I spoke with your husband yesterday, okay. I said, "Dave," I said, "Man, I want to get with piano, man." I said, "I want to get to it." I said, "Is there a way?" Dave said, "Look man, I can show you that in 20 minutes." See what I'm saying? You see? For, like, the teacher that tells the kid, "Hey, you can do this; here it is. Bam." That's

a smart teacher. The one that says it's difficult, that's the teacher that has trouble with his own ability because he wants you to think he's greater than what he is, you know. I don't want you to do what I do, do better than what I do. 'Cause you can, and that's what you're supposed to do. You know?

Baker: And along those same lines, that's one of the things that I like the most about what you do is that you never stand still. You're always looking for a way to make it better. You're always building today on what you did yesterday, but you're taking it a step further. When I listen to your playing, one of the things I love the most -- and this is something I'd love to get in my own playing, which is another reason I listen to you all the time -- is you take the basic bebop language which all of us love and then you add -- you don't, like, say, "Okay, now I'm going to be a more contemporary player so I'm just going to take everything I've ever done and I'm going to put that on a shelf someplace and then I'm going to pick up all this new thing." You take all the new things that you hear and you incorporate it into the language that you already use. And that's what makes your playing so exciting for me. And even today, here you are setting up your practicing the clarinet, still looking for other things. And that is exciting to me, somebody who's always learning, who's always adding to what they're doing.

Moody: Well, you know, it's just like your husband's book, David's book, in his books, his books are like that. You know, he says -- he starts out, especially that cycle book [scatting]. You know what? I got an idea, too, and I thought I was going to say, "Hey, David. Man, you gotta get that book written again, but it's got to be written for clarinet." And it'd be a hell of a clarinet book. You know why? Because, like, to play those intervals on the clarinet, that would make a cat play jazz even better because people are saying, [scatting]. As soon as they come to some interval, [scatting]. Uh-oh! Uh-oh! And you know why? Because there's no material like that.

Baker: That's right.

Moody: But with his singing [scatting] and -- and believe it or not, like, I take it and I take one thing, I say, [scatting] on clarinet. Now, I've got to -- I've got to transpose everything, but just imagine if the book were written for clarinet or if it was written for trombone. Or if it was written for trumpet. Or each instrument, see, 'cause it's just there. Bam! Cycles.

Baker: Right.

Moody: But not cycles for clarinet, cycles for trumpet. You know what I mean? I mean that -- that -- you know. And -- and I don't even want a percentage of it 'cause he done it up for me musically --

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: -- he's paid me a million times! I mean, that -- that -- that's -- you know what I'm saying? [laughs] Yeah. But -- but, you know, all I can do is -- is, like, you say, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, right?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: Okay. English. In French, it's A, B, C, Duh, Eh, F. And -- and -- and Spanish, it's just A, B, I think. But some of the things change. The alphabet is different in different languages. So -- but, it's still the alphabet. So what you gotta do is say, "Well, the bebop for me is the alphabet." So I take that and I build on it. So now, a young musician, if he gonna, play, he gonna come up -- I came up with [scatting], you know, we wanted counter. You know that *I Got Rhythm* thing. The young player of today is coming up with [scatting] the Coltrane changes. Now, that's cool, but he would also be hip to avail himself of the bebop thing, like, the bebop musicians went and looked into some of the Dixieland stuff, you know. Oh, okay. [scatting] You know, because that would reinforce his -- they say "vocabulary" -- his alphabet. For him to be able to expound.

Because all music is is -- is a bank account. That's all it is. Music is a bank account, and the more music you put in your bank account, the more music you have to draw from. When you deplete it, you know, there's nothing there. And how do you deplete it? By not practicing and by -- by not learning anything. So you've got to replenish your bank account. And as soon as you put something in there, that becomes obsolete because, like, you know that, all right, and everybody else knows it 'cause they heard you play it, so you going to play that again? Like, I think, when people play the same thing over and over again, I think maybe they've given up. You know. Because less -- or either they don't know. Because when I was with Dizzy's band, I used to play the same solo because it was a -- a -- a bridge that not -- wasn't familiar to me and it went down in half steps. [scatting] Right, say, [scatting]. You know what I mean?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: And so now, I can do it. I say, "Well, I'm not going to do the same thing I did then." Even if I have to -- like, if I played "Giant Steps", what I'd do is I say, "Okay." I try to start on a different note each time I start playing, you know. [scatting] next time, it's [scatting], next one, it's [scatting]. You know what I mean? 'Cause at least it sounds different. Then, after a while I get sick of that, I say, "Well, I don't wanna start on any of those. I want to start on none of the quarter tones to go," you know, like that. And, I mean, and after you do that, there some other things you can do, like, I mean, if I live 200 years, I still wouldn't be able to exhaust the possibility that what could be played.

A guy is born. A baby's born. You say, "Okay, you're going to play one song for the rest of your life." *Giant Steps*. That's it. That's the only song you can play. He can live 200 years and still wouldn't be able to play everything that they would be playing on that and be studying every day, playing it. You still would not be able to exhaust what could be played on that thing. You know? So, I think of that, and I say, "Well, let me get up off my butt and try to do something." [scatting] You know what I mean? Yeah?

Baker: When you -- your first recorded solos were with Dizzy's band and --

Moody: On Emmanon.

Baker: -- on Emmanon.

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: What was that like doing your first solos with a big band like that?

Moody: You see, that's the funny thing. People always think that when you do something, oh, it must've been like you were getting ready for it, or something, I wasn't supposed to take the solo.

Baker: Oh, really?

Moody: No. It was a baritone solo and he wasn't there. He was late.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: So he looks at me and says, "You take it." I -- so that was it. You know what I mean? Mood for Love, same way. I picked up the alto and I started saying [scatting]. And the reason I did that is because I played tenor all the time, was alto, uh-oh! Unfamiliar key, another key. See? And I'm playing "I'm In the Mood for Love". And that was it. People say, "You must've been inspired!" Inspired? I was just trying to play the thing and not play a wrong note. [laughter] You know what I mean? Yep. So, that's the truth, you know.

And I tell the truth because the truth always come out. Like I tell my Honey, I says, "Honey, you know, I don't know about this." When I go to a school to give a clinic, I tell the kids, "Look, if I know something, I'll try to show it to you. If I don't, we'll find out together." And if they ask me something, I say, "I don't know, but let's find out." You know? And that way, they can't say, "Boy, he's trying to pretend he knows this or that and he doesn't." You know. But once I get it, I can expound on it.

Baker: And it's yours forever, too, isn't it?

Moody: Oh, yes! But I give it to everybody else. I mean, if they want it, I give it to 'em.

Baker: Well, and you've got a great memory for these things, too. I'll -- you'll be able to point to different things and things that you've done over the years and tell me, "And this is what I did here and what I did there," and everything. You've got a tremendous memory --

Moody: Well, I can kind of --

Baker: -- for what you have -- what you have done.

Moody: Whatever I do, I can kind of show you what I did or how I did it.

Baker: Right. Right, right.

So then after that initial solo experience on Emmanon, that -- did that pretty much establish you

as a soloist, then, within the band or did you have to wait a little while before you got some more experience?

Moody: No, I was playing in the band anyway and I wasn't playing anything. I was [scatting]. I mean, I -- I didn't, you know, know you were supposed to practice and you're supposed to play different things. I didn't know that.

Baker: How did you come on that knowledge? Did somebody show you that that's what you needed to do, or was that something you picked up from being around the other musicians?

Moody: Oh, don't you remember -- I told you -- remember yesterday when we were taking about the Phil Board [phonetic sp.] in Philly --

Baker: Right.

Moody: -- the guy said, "Sonny Rollins [phonetic sp.] wrote this out for me." Wrote it out? I wonder what? And then 2 and 2 started clicking, said, "Oh, okay." I mean, you're supposed to do that.

Baker: 'Cause it sounded from what you doing, like, in those '46 and '47, I mean '45 and '46 recordings that you'd already figured that out, it was still --

Moody: No. No. You're listening. Did you know that if you shut and you listen? You know, if you took a baby, young kid, and say [scatting], you know. And --
-- wanna hear.

Baker: Yeah, he's gonna cue us here in just a second.

Moody: You know, you take the baby and you sing "Giant Steps" to it or you play "Giant Steps" over the crib and the baby will hear that. And the baby will be used to doing that. You see, familiarization with your ear is that familiarizes you with your eyes when you see things, you know. Like, remember I -- like, I said [scatting], you know? So, like I didn't just wake up one day and I could say [scatting]. I had to say [scatting]. You know? [scatting] And if you're used to hearing things, then, like, you say, "Oh, boy. That's good!" Just like I say now, if they played this music over the radio and they played it and people heard it, people would -- that's what they would want to hear. Just like the Tonight Show, now, with Branford, you know, in the band Jay Leno?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: People are hearing it and they're saying, "You know, the music, it doesn't sound too bad now." No, it sounds the same. Your ear is just becoming accustomed to something that's better than what you've been listening to. Because when you've been eating doo doo, a little piece of chocolate tastes much better.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. And that's about the size of it. I mean, the music that these people listen to -- I mean, it's ridiculous. You know. My neighbor over there -- the -- the guy -- what's the name? -- some of the stuff he listens to? You know. [scatting] And it's that same thing. If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with bull shit.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: And that's the only way you can say it. And it's written and things. You know. And that's the size of it. So they play it as loud as they can play it and that's supposed to impress you. And that should tell you something there. If you have to listen to music and they gotta have smoke going, girls shaking their butts, or guys shaking their crotches and stuff, and -- and -- and the smoke is going, something should tell you they're trying to fool you with something. Papa Rider [phonetic sp.] doesn't say [scatting] and you don't see girls swinging -- swaying and bliss hanging out and guys rubbing themselves and stuff. For that, people are listening to that. So how come, now, all these other people, they've gotta have smoke going and these big loudspeak - - because not a damn -- we used to do a show and it was sloppy -- I forgot. It was Sloppy White or Slappy and -- was Willie Louis and Slappy White [phonetic sp.]. And Willie Louis used to get out front stage and say -- the curtain would on him -- somebody from the audience would say, "What time did the show go on?" You know. And the guy said, "The show's going on know." The guy says, "You could've fooled me!"

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Then the guy say, "Is anything going on backstage?" He say, "No!" He say, "Ain't nothing going on in front, either!" You know. Well, that's the same way with that music. If people really heard the music, took away the smoke, the drums beating all loud and bam-ditty-bam, and just played the melody, and they heard that, they'd wanna kill somebody. You know. Because it's sad. Sadder than McKinley's funeral!

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: And like they say, "How sad was that?" Well, he was dead, you know, and so was that music.

Baker: I know you don't probably have a lot of time to listen because you're on the road a lot, you're trying to practice, you're trying to spend time with your family when you're home, spend time with your wife, but what do you listen to when you're just listening for your own enjoyment? What kinds of music, what players do you enjoy listening to?

Moody: You know, anybody that's playing decent music. Anybody! I want to listen to it. Of course, I like to listen to -- to -- to soloists, you know, whether it be guitars, trumpets, saxophone, piano, but good music, and good music, to me, entails nice chord changes or someone thinking musically or someone with -- trying to incorporate some music knowledge skill wise or, you know, into their playing. And -- and I hear this. You know. I mean, I listen to it. That's -- that's what attracts me. But music that's just being played for people, that kind of gets on my nerves a

little bit. Because you can tell when it's being played for people to listen to so they'll get it. You know. You know. And then you can tell when the people -- when the musicians are playing 'cause it's something hip that they like and they wanna play it for the music. You know. You know.

But I like to listen to -- I like some classical music. See, I don't like all classical music and I don't like all jazz. You know. I don't like all music, but I respect all music, mainly because the notes are there. You know. I might not like where you put the notes, but I respect the notes. You know. If you can understand what I mean by that.

Baker: Sure.

Moody: You know. But I -- I like to listen to all -- all the guys, you know. You know like [indiscernible] Randy, you know, Tom Howell [phonetic sp.], John [indiscernible], Joe Henderson [phonetic sp.], Howell Land [phonetic sp.]. You know. Dick Oat [phonetic sp.] -- Joe Levano [indiscernible]. You know. You know. [indiscernible] Miller, you know, Mark Copeland [phonetic sp.], Todd Coolman, my good -- yeah, I like so many guys. I mean, many, many musicians.

And that's another thing, so many musicians, good musicians that can play and you see some of these festivals and, man, you wonder, "I wonder," you know, "I wonder." [laughs]

Baker: Where are they?

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: How come they're not here?

Moody: Yeah, uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah. You know.

Baker: You know, there must've been players over the years that you worked with or players whose playing you knew and respected that really haven't gotten the attention and gotten the opportunities for people to hear them and for the public to know them. Would you like to mention some people that you feel have never really gotten the recognition that -- that they should? People that you felt were great players? That --

Moody: Well, how 'bout Lucky Compton [phonetic sp.], for one?

Baker: -- people coming up need to know about?

Moody: How 'bout Lucky Compton, for one?

Baker: Sure, sure.

Moody: Lucky was one that -- that -- you know, I don't think he got a good break. And then, the lot of guys -- a lot of guys that I don't know their names, except I know they play tenor, some

play trumpet, that they didn't really get good recognition. I mean, that's why for the longest time, I used to say and I said it yesterday, "The best are yet to be heard." You know, because a lot of people -- you go to different cities, there's a guy there that's a mailman or he's truck driver or something, you know, and he plays his horn or guitar, like, at night somewhere. Because, like, he -- he couldn't get a break and -- and he -- oh, and I love this. When he gets married, you know, and the wife marries him and then she says, "Why don't you get a day job?" You know. Like that. You know. So, like I'm sorry if I can't come up with more names, but --

Baker: Sure.

Moody: -- there's lots of musicians that. But, you know, you don't even have to do that. Look at Dizzy Gillespie. You know, you really wanna look at something. If Diz -- if Diz would've been another kind of a person, he would've been a multi-, multi-, multi-, multi-millionaire. Okay? You know? Because there were guys that didn't do what Diz did, but they were more, I mean, you know, mainly because -- you know that's the thing that's wrong with -- with -- with -- with America. They have double, triple, quadruple standards. You know. And they apply to different people. You see? So if you -- sometimes if you're certain hue and you do something, I mean, you become more rewarded for that than a person who is another hue. You know. And that -- that's a drag, but it's a fact. And -- and my wife, who's Norwegian and she's born in Tacoma, Washington, but I'm saying this to say that my wife -- I look at her, sometimes I say, "Honey, I don't think -- I hope you don't think I'm being paranoid, but you know, just watch this and look at this." And now, she sees some of the things before I do. It's just some things that people do like, unbeknowing to themselves, maybe, like as a habit. Like, if I go in a store -- if I go into a store and -- and I'm a Negro, there's a Caucasian guy there, I come in the store, then he comes in, the girl will come in and the guy will come in and automatically look at the Caucasian guy, say, "May I help you, sir?" And it always -- it never fails. The guy will look at me and say, "He was here first." Mainly because I'm not one of those, "I was here first! You don't tell me! Dammit! You always do that to me!" I -- I just -- I don't say one word but I just wait. You know? And they say, "Oh, oh, I'm sorry." And some of them saw me come in first and still do that. You know. And I just -- that's okay. 'Cause if you want to be a fool, go ahead and be one. [laughs] You know. But people need to -- and I also say if everybody was blind, who would you know to hate? I think I said that yesterday.

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: So if that's the case, why don't they quit that doo doo and -- and start, like, remembering that no matter who it is, everybody, like, has a heart and everybody has feelings and everyone wants the same thing. I mean, in relationship to everything else. You know. So, like, learn to respect yourself. And then if you respect yourself, then you can respect me. You know. Other people.

Baker: We talked a little bit about the critics yesterday and one thing I'd like to talk a little bit about today because you've had a lot of experience in this area and also recent experience in this area is what's been going on in the recording business for jazz artists for many years.

Moody: Well, for the longest time, like, I always think the people that do the recording, they're

business people. But they don't know anything about the music. Just because you listen to music and you like music doesn't mean you know something about it. You know what you hear and you know -- you know what you like. But that doesn't necessarily make it valid, okay? So what they do is they always -- I never will forget -- I'd be in the studio and Leonard -- Leonard Lenichess [phonetic sp.] -- no, Phil -- I think was his brother, he would come up behind me when I'm in the studio and say, "Get hot." [laughter] And I just laughed to myself. I say, "Okay. Get hot here." You know. "Get hot." Just like they -- sort of like I was told, like, the guy says, "I'd like you to make a straight ahead album." What the hell is a straight ahead album? You know. People want -- they say they like the way I play, but then if I go to make a record, they want me to play like I played 20 years ago. You know. And what I want to do is grow. So now, instead of they don't want me to do that, but then they want to get the younger guys and let them do what they want to do. And what they're doing is playing what they're playing and that's good. Well, how come you can't let an older guy play what he wants to play, you see? I been around; I know what I want. Then, I take -- then they ask me, say, "Well, what're you going to play?" Said, "We wanna know what you're gonna do." I says, "I'm going to tell ya, but you're not going to understand because I know what I want to do, but I don't know what I want to do." I say, "Now, can you understand that? I'm going to say it again: I know what I want to do, but I don't know what I want to do." I said, "Now, what I'm saying is today, I want to do this. Not really today, but, like, like, every minute, every 5 minutes, what I want to do changes." I said, "Well, maybe I went." No. Maybe I could do this. No, no, I can't do it. I say, so I know what I want to do, but I don't know because I don't know when I'm going to stop on the change that's being made in my mind. I say, "Now, can you understand that?" See? Now, they don't understand that because you can't understand it unless you're a musician. And -- and the reason for that is because especially now for me, is because I'm constantly trying to learn, so man, there are a billion ways you can play something. And I -- I just know how to do it 2 or 3 ways. And I'm busy trying to think of the other -- how many [indiscernible] --49 to play it. And if they could understand that, they say, "Oh, well, he can't -- you can't pinpoint it because there are lots of things he can do. Or either he can't pinpoint it because he doesn't know anything." You know, now, it's either one or the two, you know? So, but they -- they didn't understand. You know.

Then they want someone to produce the album for me. I says, "I want to be my own producer." "Yeah, but this gentleman, he can produce it because he got good ears." You know? Now, here I am 9,000 years old, what the hell have I been doing? Playing with my ears closed for all that time? My ears open, too, so I don't hear?

So anyway, we make the record and it's okay and God bless him, the guy's wonderful. So we put some bird calls on there and some [scatting] in the music, I mean.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Damn, that's not what I was playing, you know. [scatting] I mean, how come you can't say [scatting], leave it alone. You might hear some birds, he might hear some dog taking a crap, I don't know.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know what I mean? But the point is, don't -- you can't infringe your thing on something. I made the music; play that. Let everyone hear it the way they wanna hear it. You know. If I said, "Good morning," there's 3 meanings to whoever's in the room or whoever. "Good morning." Now, that depends on how you feel, how you take it; she feels, takes it. You know what I mean? So, like, you know what I hear? I hear a waterfall. Good! You know what somebody else say, he hears a Mack truck.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: What another guy hears, a mosquito or something, so that's -- that. That's what really bugs me, like, because music is oil. You know, like, [scatting]. If you close your ears, you can't see that. So -- you don't see it. But what happens is you hear it and then in your brain's eye, like, you think of something beautiful or whatever it is you want to think, somebody might say [scatting] and somebody's thinking about an axe murder. You dig? And somebody else is thinking about going skiing. [scatting] You know what I mean? So you don't know. So don't -- I can't think for you. I can only think for me. If you ask me something, I'll tell ya. So that's what I think about people who want to add something to somebody else's music. You know.

Baker: You mean, people actually overdubbed things like bird calls and stuff [indiscernible]?

Moody: Well, the last album I made, I made a thing and there was a thing there -- .

Baker: Which album is that, now?

Moody: What album was that, Honey that -- and -- and -- and they put the bird calls? [scatting]

MOODY, LINDA: That was Honey.

Moody: Honey. On Honey, yeah. And while I'm playing [scatting] -- .

MOODY, LINDA: That was a song that Mark Copeland wrote.

Moody: That Mark Copeland wrote, yeah. And on that, and they said, "Yeah," so it was on that [scatting].

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: I mean, [scatting].

Baker: I can't even imagine somebody [indiscernible].

Moody: I say, "Okay, go ahead." The producer, I mean, I just say, you know, that the producer heard that. Okay, yeah, that's nice. Go ahead. I don't give a shit.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know.
You remember?

MOODY, LINDA: Yeah. I thought part of that was Akita's [phonetic sp.] -- Akita's -- .

Moody: Well, Akita did it, I said, "Yeah," but he did it. But -- because he was told to do it.

Baker: Ahhh.

Moody: Yeah. It would sound good on that. I hear that. You play that, "Ah, I got a good idea. You know what, I hear the symphony playing, yes." Now, you know what? They faced a little more to the right, it would sound better. Yes, turn to the -- "Oh, who [indiscernible] that." "Oh, I'm the one that did that." You know, yeah. Just have the oboe hold his horn up a little higher. Yeah. Right there. You know. You know what I mean?

Baker: Did anybody ever tell you who you should use? Did they -- did anyone you recorded forever say, "I really --

Moody: You know what, they --

Baker: -- think you ought to work with -- I think you ought to bring this guy into -- ?

Moody: -- well, they wanted -- they wanted to do that, too. I want to make my album, they say, "Well, I think you outta have a guest artist." I says, "Yeah, I want to do it myself." Every time I look, they had me doing something with Dexter Gordon [phonetic sp.]. You know, like every time -- I say, "Goddam -- I mean, dammit, why don't you let me do something?" Every time, I'm doing something with Dexter or Gene Hammond [phonetic sp.] or something, it's always, you know.

Baker: Was that when you were with Chess, or?

Moody: No, not with Chess. No, just in general.

Baker: In general?

Moody: Somebody's always calling me, you know, but when it comes for record dates --

Baker: Yeah?

Moody: -- then, no, I mean, they'd get other people, you know.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know, to record. You know. "Oh, Moody, you sound good, yeah," but -- but no, but this guy, he's got his quartet, he's got his quartet, they didn't want me to have 20 people

playing with me, you know.

Baker: So on your date, they're trying to add people in --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- but on like Dexter's date, they're not calling you and saying, "Moody, why don't you come over and play on Dexter's date."

Moody: No, we'd like for you to be on Dexter's date, you know, so I'm on a couple albums with him. Yeah, so. But, man, like if they would just give my quartet a little shake and -- and would've just gone and pushed it, my quartet would've been accepted. And it'll still be accepted one day. They're telling me they don't like synthesizers. "The people don't like sy" -- what people? "Well, I -- they told me." I said, "Well, they told me they do." So, you know. I said, "It's not what the people like. I like it! I'm the one playing. It's my group. I like it! So I want that to be there." "Yeah, but we want a straight ahead album." That synthesizers -- and I got one of the best synthesizer players in the world, Mark Copeland, and they're talking about, you know.

Baker: So we're talking about now.

Moody: Now!

Baker: Okay. I -- I knew those things had happened in the past, but I had no idea that, you know, people were still trying to tell you as an established artist, now, you know, that -- that they don't like, for example, synthesizer on your albums.

Moody: But you know what? That's just the point. See, if a person doesn't know anything --

Baker: Right.

Moody: -- most people don't know who their dealing with. Say, Arsenio Hall? On his program?

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: He had Dizzy on there. He didn't know anything about Dizzy. He didn't know anything about Dizzy; he didn't know what Dizzy stood for. And a lot of people -- somebody say, "Oh, so-and-so is good or so-and-so is good, he sound pretty good." So they get you --

Baker: Right.

Moody: -- they don't -- they don't know what you stand for and they don't know what you mean, but. Listen, the album that we did, they had -- from the company -- they had the -- the Artist Department, you know, to call us up and say, "Oh, we're doing the layout for your thing and we're going to do this and da, da, da, da, da." I said, "Have you listened to the album?" She said, "No." Okay? So that goes to show you, they're going to do. "Oh, we're going to do a conceptual

thing, you know, and we're going to do it," but they didn't hear the album. So how the hell are you going to put a cover on something, you don't even know what it sounds like, you have no idea. I said, "Look, don't put anything on there. Just put my picture on the front and let it go like that." That is plain, better than, you know, the other stuff.

But, believe me, all the -- you know what? This has been going on for a long time and I know it. And I've said this a long time. People, you know, these educated people supposedly with diplomas and go and do things at different places, like, as a whole, they don't know what's happening. They don't know. And -- but the people that have been there for a while and sit down and keep their mouth shut and listen to what the artist says and try to understand and decipher what he means, those are the smart ones. You see? So if I wanted to record you, then I should let you do what you wanna do.

Baker: Have you ever had an experience like that with a record company?

Moody: You mean to do what I wanted to do?

Baker: Yes.

Moody: Yeah! When I first went with Chess and Checker! They let me do what I wanted to do and you know what? And the record sold. I mean, they sold. And anytime they've let me do what I exactly wanted to do, the record sold. When I did it exactly how I wanted to, it sold. Yeah. You know. And I'm going to do that again and eventually, if -- if I don't do it with a company, I'm going to do it myself. Me and my wife and the rest of the group. You know, you know. [laughter] Yeah.

Baker: Has a record company ever asked you to record a particular song --

Moody: Yeah! Yeah, they have.

Baker: -- or do material that you didn't --

Moody: Sure!

Baker: -- feel comfortable with, didn't wanna do?

Moody: Wasn't a point of not feeling comfortable. They wanted to do it because someone had a piece of it.

Baker: Oh.

Moody: Yeah, sure. I mean, there's always some kind of funky motive, you know, there's never any honesty to this stuff. You know? Let's be honest, you know, and -- and do the record right. You know.

Baker: How do you feel about the recent things that have come out? I know you just made

some comments about Honey. I know Sweet and Lovely --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- is out now for a little while.

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: Is it different now than it was when you -- at an earlier time the recordings that you've been doing recently?

Moody: Are -- are they different in what way?

Baker: No, I mean, is it different now working with companies --

Moody: No, no, no.

Baker: -- with the company that you're working for?

Moody: So far, it's the same.

Baker: The same?

Moody: The same because it's the recent recording that I'm talking of where I had to have a producer because they want to know what's going on in the studio. Why couldn't they let me go in? And that's another thing that pisses me, off, I mean, I'm not honest enough? They don't believe in my honesty enough where I can't go in the studio and do what I wanna do and then give them the finished product? You see, you have to have someone to oversee me? You know. That -- that -- that's a drag, too. An -- an insult, really.

Baker: And yet you've been winning awards now for your recent recordings. You've got a couple of Grammy nominations in the last few years.

Moody: Well, Grammy nomination, yeah. For singing with Dizzy. With Diz. And then with --

Baker: With?

Moody: -- the Manhattan Transfer. Yeah. Nominated, but, you know, at least people were nice enough to nominate me. [laughter]

Baker: The awards that you've won over the years, are there some that meant more to you than others?

Moody: No, not particularly because, like, if -- if I'm awarded something, I appreciate it, but it depends on who gives it to me.

Baker: Like?

Moody: I don't know. Like someone that knows. If someone were to give me something and they knew, like, like, if you and David or somebody like that would've given me something, I would treasure it more because you know about the music. So I know you're not just giving it to me because, maybe, 100,000 people came to hear me play something. You know. I mean, that - that -- I'd rather be respected by my peers than all the people say, "Oh, boy! You sure can play!" You know. [laughs] Yep.

Baker: I noticed that you're very careful about your time because with your schedule, you don't have a lot of time to practice, so you try to use that time in the best way that you can. Has your practice and -- has your practice routine changed over the years and can you describe how you decide what you're going to do when you have a couple hours to sit down and practice in the morning?

Moody: Yeah. When I sit down to practice, it's always something that I don't know. You know. If I play something that I do know, it's only because I'm trying to put something on it that I don't know to incorporate the two. But, like I -- I really enjoyed the Bernard [phonetic sp.] here, this gentlemen that's doing this here for us because each time he was here 25 minutes earlier, before, you know. And I love that. I hate with a passion, lateness. And I hate to be late and -- and -- and -- if -- if I'm with someone and they're not my wife or relatives and they're late, they can kiss my butt goodbye, man, --

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: -- because, I tell ya, I hate that. I hate it! You know why? Because you can give -- I can give you diamonds, you know, rubies, you know, automobiles, houses, but I can't give you life. You see? So I'm not going to waste your time. And I don't want my time wasted. I mean, if I can't think of nothing that would piss me off more than to be waiting 5 or 10 minutes for them to show up and they come telling me, "Oh, this happened." I don't give a damn what happened. You shouldn't have been late; you should've made more time for that. It's just a thing with me, man. I hate it! You know. And anybo -- in my group, nobody's late, ever. They're there, I mean, people are there hours before. I try to tell my boys that, you know. 'Cause they're gonna lose -- they're gonna lose jobs. They're going to lose very important things by being late.

Baker: How do you manage to get time to practice when you're on the road?

Moody: Well, it depends, like, if I'm getting up early in the morning, usually, I get up and I usually have some tea or something and then I'll take my flute and try to play a couple notes before I go because if I don't, I get a little depressed because, you know, you're playing something out there, but you're not really playing, and, see, if I don't practice something that I don't halfway know, then, like, I feel like I -- excuse me -- like I haven't done anything, so.

Baker: Do you -- do you usually pick up the flute 'cause it's the quietest instrument --

Moody: Well, I pick up the flute and -- and -- but --

Baker: -- that you have with you?

Moody: -- but it's not good to do that, but I do it because I don't really fill the instrument up because I just want to get a sound. Then, when I go to play it, I play it like that, and it's not a full sound, so. It's really a drag, but then it -- it's the second-best thing I can do for now. You know. But -- and then a thing I like to do is I like to be quiet. Soon as I get finished with a gig, I like to go back to the hotel. Immediately. Close the door, lock it, get my bags set, and then think. You know. 'Course I call my wife and all that before I do that, but then after that. After that, I think and at this stage of the game, I can lie down -- lay down in bed and practice in my head. See, I can practice -- I can -- I can -- if I have a certain thing that I wanna work on, then I can do it in my head and it's fun to just lay down. It's fun to be on the plane and flying. That's why I don't -- I hate to sit by and have somebody with a whole lot of superfluous stuff yakking at me. I don't wanna hear that. "Yeah, look at her leg, oh, boy, look at that boy." Man, I like to sit down. When we're on the bus, I sit up front, side, alone. And I -- and I look -- the bu -- the [indiscernible] going and I'm thinking, maybe, you know [scatting]. You know. Just thinking. You know. I say, "Oh, boy. Okay." And then, the nice thing about it is, I know I've got that, right? I says, "Okay, so if I got that, man, there are what? 50 or 60 ways I can do that." So I do some in my head, and then when I get to the hotel, I take the book and I'll start writing some of those things out. You know, like, different things, you know. Oh, man, I got a book full of germs that I need to make diseases come from, you know. [laughter] Yep. Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yep, I got a book full of germs, so I got a lot of diseases I can start. Yeah. I hope that answered that --

Baker: Sure!

Moody: -- a little bit anyway.

Baker: A little bit anyway, yeah, 'cause it is. It's hard, you know, to find time, I'm sure. You know, when you're traveling as much as you are. And you're traveling now probably as much as you've ever --

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: -- traveled.

Moody: And you know another thing, people think that well, you got an hour now for practice. Or, like, before, like -- like my Honey used to say, "Oh, honey, go to sleep now. You can get a nap." You know. You can't just. Like, an order to get a nap, it takes two hours to wind down and then maybe an hour to think, say, "Oh, I think I will." You wanna go, now it's time to get up. You know? You know? And I'm getting her to think that way a little bit, you know, because she just go, go, go, go, go, you know, gotta watch this, do this, pick this up, do this -- gotta do this. Wait a minute! When are you going to do something for Linda? You know?

Baker: I think a lot of people don't have an understanding of the rigors of life on the road --

Moody: No.

Baker: -- for a working jazz musician.

Moody: No, it's having fun! [laughter] It's having fun, you know. What kind of fun are you having? Well, try riding 3 airplanes and -- and 4 buses in a day, okay? And then go play the gig -- you're hungry 'cause the places are closed, and when you get off -- no -- before you go there, they're closed, when you come back, they're closed, and then when you leave, they're closed, and you do the same thing the next day. You know, you do this. And finally, you know, when you don't think you can stand any more, you get a day off, but the day off is the day that you're flying all day, and then when you get there, you get in bed, get up, and play that night, and then you go and start again, you know. Like that. In the meantime, people are clapping, "Yeah! Oh, boy -- boy, don't they have fun? Look at 'em! They're enjoying that!" And you wanna go to sleep right there. But they don't know that, you know.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: And it's been that way since the beginning.

Moody: Yeah. Went on the bus.

Baker: I mean, when you first -- because. Yeah.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: When you first started working with Dizzy's big band, you all were traveling by bus --

Moody: Yep!

Baker: Right?

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] See, like we, like, say we go, like I did this thing with Tito and we would go, like we'd play Athens. And then we'd get up early that morning 'cause then we'd have to go to Istanbul. And then we'd play Istanbul, then we'd take the plane the next day and then we'd go to France, okay?

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: Then we'd play France, then we gotta go. But the only thing is, is see, when you get to these different countries, if you have to go somewhere in France, you can't be in -- in Italy and say, "Bam! Go somewhere." You gotta go Italy, first either Rome or Milano, you gotta go back to Paris, and then from Paris you go to France. If you're going somewhere in Italy, if you're somewhere in France, you gotta fly back to Paris then catch an Italian plane or something and go to Rome. Now, if you want to go to Sweden or somewhere like that, then you -- you -- you gotta

catch a Scandinavian plane. You always gotta go back someplace. You have to backtrack to go where you're going, you know.

Now, I wanted to go -- I came home and I'm in Belgium, right, Antwerp, so I had to go to Brussels, then from Brussels to Paris, then from Paris to Chicago, here. There's a plane leaving from Brussels. But no! What they do is the same way they do it here. We can get more money if we do this, so if you wanna go directly to where you're going, that's \$4,552,000. Okay?

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: But if you wanna go roundabout way, then we'll give it to you for \$4,000,000.

Baker: [laughs]

Moody: You know. In other words, like, when you're being made love to every way, shape, form, or fashion, every time you look at it. The guy says to you, "You want the good stuff, or do you want the real good stuff, or do want the real, real good stuff?" See? I mean, all-in-all, as far as I'm concerned, all that is one big lie. So that's what bugs me 'cause everyday you get up, there's a big L-I-E. You know.

Baker: And I'm assuming just like it was pretty much in the '40s and '50s, we're not talking about you go from Athens and then you have 2 days to rest and get to Istanbul. You're talking about going to Athens and then going straight to Istanbul to play a concert and then --

Moody: No, you play Athens that night and the next night you play Istanbul --

Baker: -- you play Istanbul and the next night -- .

Moody: -- and the next night, you play [indiscernible], the next night, you play Stockholm. The next night, you play Denmark, the next night, you play Italy, the next night, you play -- that's how that was. Uh-huh. [affirmative] Yeah.

Baker: Nobody really takes into consideration the toll it takes on your body --

Moody: And --

Baker: -- going through those time zones.

Moody: -- and you go through those airports, and the airports are getting larger and larger. So, you know, like, I mean, you have -- and when the plane comes in, you don't walk too good, so when the plane comes in, your gate is way on the other side of the airport, you gotta catch another bus, go to Terminal 2, and, you know. So, you know.

Baker: And unlike, for example, a trumpet player who, when everything is over, all he does is just like put his mouthpiece and his trumpet back in his gig bag, and that's all he's got to carry --

Moody: Yep.

Baker: -- since you're a multi-instrumentalist --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- you probably usually have, what? Your alto --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- tenor, clarinet --

Moody: Soprano.

Baker: -- flute, soprano --

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- you've got all these horns you're trying to carry.

Moody: But I'm carrying 'em! Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Because you definitely don't trust those to.

Moody: Nope! Nope. That's right. And -- and -- and I can tell when I'm more tired than others because sometimes it's heavier than what it is at other times, you know. I remember, I came home the other night and -- and I was rushing with my boy. He says, "Daddy." And I says, "Oh, man." And I can tell, you know. He could tell I was tired because he was wrestling and he could feel I'm not as strong, you know. If I'm rested, man, then I can -- he says, "Yeah, I can feel it, buddy." You know. You know? So.

That's about the size -- and the nice thing is that most of all, my wife understands it now. 'Cause when I -- when we first married, I'd come home, "Oh, honey, let's go to the store and get this." And we'd be going different places and I'd be like this. You know, I'd be doing this. You know.

Baker: Asleep?

Moody: She didn't know. And then one day, she went with me. She came back, she says, "Honey, as soon as you get home, you're going to bed." Man, she had me up there in Seattle, I was going by to see my sister-in-law. Then I was going to see my mom and I do that, and I'd just come back from a tour, man, I was so tired, I tell ya, I couldn't see straight.

Then, my vertigo. See, when I get real tired, the vertigo comes on me. You know. That came on me, man, the vertigo, I was, oh, man! I really needed a lot of sleep. Yeah.

Baker: Be nice if the promoters, producers, and everybody could understand.

Moody: Well, they don't understand 'cause all they see are dollar signs.

Baker: Right.

Moody: They -- but it would be nice if like -- Stan Getz had the thing going for him, man, like, he would go play one gig, then he'd have two days off. He'd play another gig, there'd be 3 days off. And the guy would still be getting paid. That was nice.

Baker: How'd he manage to do that?

Moody: Well, I don't know.

Baker: That's nice.

Moody: That's Stan Getz. Remember what I said about Dizzy?

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Moody: Stan Getz. They were different, you know. [laughs]

Baker: Uh-huh. [affirmative] I got ya.

Moody: And I hate to, you know, I hate to say that, but it is. People would just face up to the reality and then say "That's life", but we have to remember that now and, you know, bend. But. Yeah. [laughs]

Baker: One of the things that Jesse [phonetic sp.] wanted me to ask you about was the different singers that you've worked with over the years. Now, I know you had a very close relationship with Babs Gonzales [phonetic sp.] for a while? And then also Eddie Jefferson, worked with Dinah Washington, Ella Fitzgerald, all of these wonderful singers, and you're a wonderful singer yourself.

Moody: I am?

Baker: Yes you are, yes you are. Could you talk a little bit about the -- all your years with, for example, let's start sort of chronologically. Maybe you could talk a little bit about Babs Gonzales.

Moody: Oh, well, Babs [laughter]. Babs was -- I think he was Errol Flynn's valet at one time.

Baker: Who -- Errol Flynn?

Moody: Errol Flynn, yeah. And Babs was one of those kind of guys that would talk himself into a gig and then talk himself out, you know. And -- and he was one of those kind of guys that, you know [scatting], the flat 5, you know. So his thing would be [scatting], he'd sing that, then

[scatting]. Flat 5 as they call it, you know. And he -- Babs was like a good -- a good manager, I mean, he knew the music business a little bit, you know. Like that.

Baker: Did you all meet in Dizzy's band?

Moody: No. Met in Newark. 'Cause he's from Newark. His name was Leroy Brown [phonetic sp.].

Baker: Oh. [laughter] Bad, bad.

Moody: Babs Gonzales. Yeah. But the reason he did that and put his there, because everybody was doing that because if you didn't look like a Negro, then, like, they figured, well, you could get away with a little more, you know, if his name was Babs Gonzales, he wasn't a nigger.

Baker: Oh.

Moody: Let's face it, I mean, that's the thing, man. It's ridiculous, but that's -- and here it is 1993 and it's the same crap. You know. And I'm sick of it. Dealing with people, you know, especially people, you know, not even being able to count to 9 thinking that they're better than other people. Yeah.

Baker: So Babs was working with your small group?

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: He was with the septet when I came back because I got one after the -- the recording in Stockholm. So Babs was in that group. He was, like, the manager 'cause he knew the ropes and I didn't, you know. Then, like, in Dizzy Gillespie's band, like, I played -- we played for, like, Savon [phonetic sp.], Ella Fitzgerald. Did we ever play for B? I think we did behind B or something and. --

Baker: Billy Eckstein?

Moody: Uh-huh. [affirmative] Billy Eckstein, Dinah Washington, of course, Johnny Hartman [phonetic sp.]. Johnny Hartman and I, we're roommates for a quick minute there. And also Chano Pozo [phonetic sp.]. You know. What other singers did we? Oh, man.

Baker: And these were all singers who were very much respected --

Moody: Oh, yeah. Uh-huh. [affirmative]

Baker: -- by the instrumentalists.

Moody: Wait a minute. Gotta [indiscernible].

Baker: What do you think -- oh, well, let me back up a second. Oh. Can we -- can we start over a second?

TECHNICIAN: Sorry, just.

[Begin of CD #5]

Baker: Could you talk a little bit about Eddie Jefferson and your relationship with him musically and personally over the years?

Moody: Oh, well me and Eddie Jefferson were like, we were good friends. And as a matter of fact, after I had disbanded I formed an organ trio, and I had Eddie Jefferson with me. It was Eddie Gladden, Mickey Tucker and myself.

Baker: That was in the -- Of what?

Moody: I forget what the dates were, but it was after I'd broken up with the septet, and I wasn't with Dizzy Ij (phonetic sp.). And I'd been with Dizzy and then, you know formed another group again. So --

Baker: This was before you went back with Dizzy when he had the quintet right? That was -- Okay.

Moody: Yeah. That was before. Right.

Baker: Okay. Yeah. Okay.

Moody: Then after that I would do singles. They would call me to go somewhere, and I would always -- I'd call Eddie if possible, and I'd take him with me. A lot of times we would travel in his Cadillac that he had. You know, he had a Cadillac, an old one.

Then later on uh, we uh, -- Like I would go to New York, and I would stay with Eddie or something. I never will forget, because he asked me because I fry chicken. So I frowned (phonetic sp.), I frowned [laughter], I flied some chicken, you know, for him. And he'd love to get a big thing full of ice cream and get in bed and eat ice cream and write lyrics. You know, since I was -- Uh, and so Eddie would --

You know, we'd be sitting down, and we'd be just talking, cracking jokes, you know about riding up and down the highway. Going wherever we were going. And you know, there was some innuendoes about whether Eddie Jefferson was -- weather there was something funny about him or something because of what happened in Detroit. You know, about his -- Like his death. And I stayed with Eddie. Like we went down south and we used to room together, and I had no inkling. I didn't get any indication of anything. So, -- of him being other than Eddie Jefferson.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: So I didn't know anything about anything like that. But I know Eddie was a very talented person. And I remember reading in the paper somewhere where I think. And I'm saying I think because I want to leave room like the medical profession does. This may help your arthritis. [laughter] I think it was written that like I didn't give Eddie enough room for him to do what he wanted to do. And as far as I was concerned, like I had no inkling of that because whatever Eddie Jefferson, whatever he wanted to do, like I'd have them write an arrangement for him so he could do it. You see?

So a lot of people from outside looking in and then after when something happens. You see, now when I went to Vegas then all of the sudden they recognize Eddie Jefferson. You see?

Baker: Oh.

Moody: So I mean, he wasn't doing any more than what he was doing with my band. So now how come they couldn't recognize him then? Cause everywhere we went the people dug him.

Baker: Sure.

Moody: You know. I mean they dug the group. And so there was no difference. But it was written like he was stifled by me. If anything, I thought I helped him to be heard. You know. Because I'm the one who hired him to do the Moody Mood for Love. He did Workshop. And he had some other things that he did by (Indiscernible). And I said okay. So we arrangements written so he could do it. You know what I mean?

So anyway, that's one thing that was said. But a lot of times people say a lot of things that they don't know what they're talking about. Such as my birthday is March 26, 1925. That's my birthday. Okay? And it was wrong in the Encyclopedia of Jazz. I'm not even going to say what it was, because if I do then someone might hear it and state that again. My birthday is March 26, 1925. So that makes me 35. I can count good too. [laughter]

Baker: And of course Eddie never felt that way. He was your good friend.

Moody: No. Oh, yeah.

Baker: It's amazing how things like that get written and then people get the wrong idea. That's why I think it's so important that we're doing something like this for the Smithsonian where the musician gets to speak for himself for a change instead of the publicist for the record company speaking for him.

Moody: Yeah. Right.

Baker: -- or the promoter for the tour speaking for him or what have you.

Moody: Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: You know, cause it is strange how sometimes the musician is the last one consulted

about what it is that's going to be put out in public under his name.

Moody: And you know what? That's like when Dizzy passed away. When Dizzy passed away at the hospital, I was there with him. John Fatus (phonetic sp.) was there. Jack Mooyel (phonetic sp.) and John Motley. And then when we read about it and heard about it over the news, they said he passed away with music playing. Dizzy's diamond was playing, and it's a damn lie. Dizzy was sitting in a chair trying to breathe. And he died sitting up. You know. And I'm looking right at him. And there were four of us in the room.

And somebody said the other day that in ten years there'll be 25 people in the room with him. You know.

Baker: You got that right.

Moody: Yeah. You know.

Baker: I'm so glad you were there.

Moody: Yeah. Me, too. And Honey told me. Linda said, "Honey, you were supposed to be there." You know. Because like every time I'd get a chance I'd always go and try to be a few days to take him to a ride. You know. And I had a gig at Pace University on the seventh of January. And the name of Dizzy's nurse was Donna Pace. You know.

Baker: Really?

Moody: Uh-huh (affirmative). And Dizzy died on January the sixth. And on the eighth I opened in Washington, D.C. On the ninth I came back for his funeral. And the funeral procession went from the church on Electus (phonetic sp.) Avenue by 52nd Street, up by Mettens (phonetic sp.), across by 125th Street Apollo Theater, and then out to the graveyard there. And when we passed there, we passed by Johnny Hodge's grave. It wasn't too far from where Dizzy was put. You know. But it was a strange, strange few days there. I never saw anything like that. And then I called Linda afterwards to tell her, and I was about to cry a little bit. And I wanted to hang up. She said, "Honey, don't hang up. Go ahead. It's okay."

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. But he really – You know, like – And then a couple times there was one time I kind of looked up at the sky and kind of cussed him out. You know. What the – Son of a B. I told you what to do, and you didn't do it. You – You know. You just – Angry about a lot of things you know. So anyway.

And I told Honey, I said, "If I were to pick up the phone and he was on it, you know, it wouldn't surprise me." [laughter] You know. Even now in fact. A couple times I'd call Linda.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And she wasn't home. I says, "Honey, I've been calling you, and you said you were going to be home." She says, "Honey, I was home." You know, I said, "Well, I called 569-487." She says, "Honey. That's Dizzy's number." You know. I did that about four or five times. You know, subconsciously. So anyway. But I sure miss him man. Like I said yesterday man, everywhere I go now it's the first time going there without him. You know, like – Because everywhere I've gone, the first time I was there I was there with Gary. You know.

And man, he was always nice about things. We went to Brazil, and they had up in big letters Dizzy Gillespie and James Moody. They put my name just as big as his on the other side. And I said, "Hey, wait a minute." I says, "Man, you can't do that." I said, "No, no, no, no." I said, "Please. Can't you take that off?" I said, "It's too late. Now it's up there." And Dizzy did like a face and said, "Moody, leave it. Come on man." He said, "And that puts another light on the subject." He said, "We got to think now. What are you going to do about yourself?" (scatting) That's Dizzy. See. [laughs] So, anyway.

FEMALE: That's you too honey.

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. But anyway. You know. Se la vi.

Baker: Well, you just touched on something that I wanted to ask you about. This may be a good time to ask you then. I know from our own personal experience with you over these last years that for a number of years you've been very interested in nutrition and healthy behavior, etc., etc. Many in the jazz community became relatively infamous for their less than healthy behavior to the point where the press just loved it. They ate it up. They made it seem like everybody was leading a very unhealthy lifestyle, etc.

But now you're very much into the whole idea of nutrition and conditioning, which is great with the kind of travel schedule and everything you have. You're in great health. You look terrific. Would you like to talk a little bit about what kinds of things you're trying to do now in the hopes that maybe some other people will think a little bit about this too?

Moody: Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: Because I know, you just mentioned, you know you were trying to get Dizzy to think about that.

Moody: Yup. Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: And your other friends. You've been great about sending us information, products, things that you think will help us.

Moody: Okay. Here it is. Remember I told you that America was the land of mediocrity?

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And that the government sucks. You know. And that people in a whole are like in

trouble.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: On a whole. And the reason for that is because of what they eat. Now, let me explain it. You got your Burger Kings, your McDonald's, your Dunkin' Donuts. You know. All these things are unhealthy, I mean to the point of killing you. And just because you're young – When people are young, their body can fight off poisons a little better than someone that's older. And your body can only fight off poison for a certain length of time. Then after that the body says, "The hell with it. That's it."

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And the body is really sick. Okay? Now. The proof of the pudding is when something dies, what do you do with it?

Baker: Throw it away?

Moody: When something dies you throw it away?

Baker: Well, you don't put it in your body.

Moody: When something dies, what do you do with it? When people die, what do they do with it?

Baker: Oh, you bury them.

Moody: You bury them. Okay. What's the difference between a dead person and a dead horse or a dead cow or a dead pig or a dead chicken or a dead fish? Okay? Okay. But the only thing is you bury a dead human being, but when it comes to a dead cow, fish, pig, or chicken American people put gravy on it and eat it. Okay. And it's dead, which means that there's no nutritional value there really whatsoever.

So if you want something that's living to live better, you give it something that's living. So it stands to reason that if your body's living, you should put living things in your body. So what's living? Fresh vegetables, fruit, grain. Okay? Fresh juices.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: Fresh. Now remember we spoke before about one big lie. You walk in the supermarket, fresh beef. Have you ever seen a live cow in a supermarket? [laughter] Fresh chicken. Have you ever seen a live chicken in the supermarket? Fresh fish just standing there with his mouth open with a cherry in it. Deader than a doornail. [laughter] You see what I mean? That's not fresh. That's dead.

So now if you want to talk about rejuvenating your body, you got to get out in the sunlight with

the air, the freshness, and eat oranges and apples. I mean that – You know what I mean. And some fresh grain. If you're going to have brown rice, you know, oats and things of that nature. That makes your body better. But eating hamburger, Burger King's and clogging your system up full of fat and grease and poisons.

Because you have that book Fit for Life. So you read in the book Fit for Life where it said just before animals are slaughtered they know they're going to be slaughtered. So there's a certain chemical that comes into their body with the blood coagulating all like that. That's poison for anybody that eats it. You know?

And it's the same way with the fluoride that they're putting in water. I mean, all that is big money. Big bucks. Fluoride. Listen. God made water. God did not make Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, 7-Up, Sprite. Okay. God did not make Gatorade. You know. God made water. Now how are you going to improve on water? And when you're thirsty, nothing quenches your thirst except water. You can drink cold beer, all that stuff, but you eventually just got to go to the water. Okay? So how come they're going to put fluoride in the water because it stops tooth decay? That's some round about, dumb behind doo-doo. That's what that is. And you know, it all comes from dumb people in the government, you know, figuring that we'll make some bucks getting rid of this fluoride stuff by putting it in water because it will do this. You know. I mean, that's the same as putting – I got to got a good example of putting something in something else in order for it to do something else. No. That's not the way you do things. Leave the water the way it is and eat the right kind of food. Quit eating those gumballs and jelly beans like that jerk Reagan. You know. And yeah, I call him a jerk because the man had no knowledge of anything except his big movies. And the man had a small mind.

Anytime a man will sit there and say that street people, they don't have to be on the street if they don't want to. They can get a place to stay. I mean, damn. Here I am. There's a place I want to get and I can't get it yet because I got to get a few more bucks because it's too much damn money. And that's me. Now how do you think somebody on the street with no job is going to get something? They don't have to be there. They can get up and get a place to stay. The man's ignorant. Excuse me. The man is very ignorant. You know. Along with his friend Bush, who should have been blasted away a long time ago.

So as far as eating right, if the American people ate right, they would start thinking right. They eat too much meat, too much sugar, too much stuff. And that's why they stay pissed off all the time. They're pissed off and angry because their body's all clogged up, and there's doo-doo in them that hasn't come out for the past 20 some years. I'm serious.

Baker: I know.

Moody: The residue. You know. If they ate right, they would be clean inside. You got to be clean inside in order to be clean outside. You know. So when they say I got blind eyeballs, I mean that's more than just a notion.

And you know the sad part about what I'm saying? It's the truth. That's sad. If someone could look at me and say, "He's running his mouth, but he doesn't know what he's talking about." I

mean, then okay. But everything I'm saying, everything I've said, it's the truth.

Baker: Well, I know you had your share of health problems in your earlier years, and I think one of –

Moody: Oh, I used to drink.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh (affirmative). I drank. I went to Overbrook because I drank too much alcohol. And I stayed at that thing maybe six months. Something like that.

Baker: Now what is Overbrook exactly?

Moody: Overbrook is a mental institution, but they also have a ward in there for alcohol, for drugs, things of that nature.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And so that – I admitted myself. You know. I just got sick of it. I said, "If I keep this up, drinking, I'll kill myself with drinking." So I just – I went on up there. I stayed six months.

Baker: Did you play at all while you were there?

Moody: No. Uh-Uh (negative).

Baker: Just concentrated completely on –

Moody: Yeah. Because in the first place I blamed everything else for my drinking other than what the fault really was. And then finally I realized that like I'm the one that was doing the drinking, but the reason I drank was because I was being praised. You know. Said, "Boy. Oh, man. You sure sound great." Stuff like that. And I didn't know anything.

You see, when you don't know something and people keep telling you, "Boy, you're great. You're great." You say, "I'm great." But I'm not doing anything. And I don't know how to – Whatever I'm doing, I don't know how to make it even better. You know? And so, I mean that had to do with the drinking. You know. Cause I'm doing – You know, I'm playing everything. I hear Sonny Valor is playing (Indiscernible), and I'm playing. That's man, what a good – And they were lerted (phonetic sp.). They knew.

So now I'm beginning to know now. And I'd say, "Oh, okay." So I feel very good about it, because I haven't reached my full potential now.

Baker: It sounds like that was a real turning point in your life, the time that you spent there.

Moody: Yeah. Yup. And the real turning point now is to have a wonderful wife like my wife

Linda. You know, my honey. Man, she's real supportive, you know. And she knows. Like what she doesn't know in her mind, she knows innately she knows. She feels. But the main thing is that she's got a good spiritual heart. You know, we're looking for that together. So she's a very loving lady. My honey. I love you. [laughter]

Baker: Well, having a stable family environment sure does a lot for someone who's in a profession that's a physically and mentally very demanding profession when many of those demands and insecurities, etc. aren't even recognized by people who don't see it all the time.

Moody: Well, I guess maybe it's good that I've been through what experiences I've been through. The marriages. And I guess the same for my honey, like for her to have the experiences that she's had. Because now you put it together and like we feel like we're one. You know. You know, we're not husband and wife. We're one.

Baker: That's beautiful. I love that.

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. You know like we used to say, "That's us." I said, "No. This is us." You know.

Baker: Well, it's certainly understandable with all the ups and downs and everything in your life. One thing I thought would be interesting would be to talk a little bit more about the foundation laid by your mother for all this.

Moody: My mother was wonderful. She was wonderful. She –

Baker: She's a thread that runs right from the beginning all the way up to yesterday when you were talking to her on the phone.

Moody: Uh-huh (affirmative). Okay. She always told me from the very beginning. Well, let me put this to you. When I was a kid, she took me to see Tom Mix. And Tom Mix was a cowboy, right? And he was doing little things for the little kids. And I was a little kid, too.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And when it got to me, he fluffed me off. You know. And he fluffed me off because I was Negro. Things like that, you know. So, but mother – We said that, but my mother always told me you took a person the way they are. You know. And I never heard my mother say this white that or this Chinese that, or this – She never said any of those things.

And as far as my like having a wife or anything, my mother always told me whoever I loved it was okay with her. I mean, we just never spoke about like –

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: I mean, things were the way they were, and she just instilled in me like you have to take a person for what they are. And I think that that happened because my mother went to

school because my mother told me, she said my aunt's husband grabbed her and tried to do things to her, to seduce her. And her mother got pissed off thinking it was her fault. See? So now I can relate to all these women being abused and things because my mother's mother's sister's husband tried to seduce my mother.

And so in order to make things better around the house, they sent my mother to this all girls school called Matha (phonetic sp.). And my mother got a half way decent education there. And for that reason, I don't say I ain't going. You know. Because if I did, she'd say, "No. I'm not going." You know. She'd always doing something like that. She'd tell me. Now the lisp that I have comes because I'm hard of hearing. I told you that. And I don't hear S's. But my mother always tried to – Her word for it was I want you to be polished. You want to be a musician. I want you to be polished. She liked the musician in Jimmy Langston's band. Like Ray Nance used to, oh, baby. He's a clown. And she said, "Well, I don't want that. I don't want you to be a clown. I want you to be polished." But I wound up being a clown anyway. [laughs] You know. But you know.

But she – You know. That was her thing. She had class. And then my uncle Louie going to Europe, he and my aunt. And then me going to Paris and being in Paris in like '48 and seeing different cultures. And then going to other countries. That changed my whole outlook about a lot of other things, because you know how you see things. And you say, "Oh, man." You know. And then you really see things. And you say, "Oh. [laughs] Okay." You know.

So like I became a little wiser about things. And it even put a more potent – a stamp on it to make it even more potent about what my mother had told me. Because basically people all over the world, they're the same. The same. I mean, they're no different.

Now if people want to make it different, you know. If you say I ain't and you say I aunt and oh, I am. But it doesn't make any difference. You're still somebody trying to express themselves. And just because a person doesn't have education doesn't mean that the person isn't a brilliant, smart, wise, good person. And they make a lot of mistakes. They make a lot of mistakes because they look at someone and assume.

And when I say they, I mean the them, republican American. I'm calling them they just like they call me a them. [laughter] Because I'm a them. You know. Or I'm a they. You know.

Baker: Right. Right.

Moody: Which is a lot of shit. You know. Crap. [laughs] I get sick of that. You know. Especially when you look and you go to some of these stores and you see all the people that are better than you. [laughs] You know.

Baker: Right. Right. Right.

Moody: If they – The beauty is in the eye of the beholder, then I'm saying, "Well, where the hell is their beholder?" You know. I mean, damn. The only beholder is God, man. You know. So, anyway.

Baker: That must have been particularly exciting for you then when Dizzy put together the whole concept of the United Nations Band. And then that band became a reality and you were a part of it.

Moody: I enjoyed it because you had [laughs] – I remember something Dizzy said. I got to say it the way he said it. He said something like, "Three Spanish guys and something four Panamanians and so many Dominican Republicans and four niggers." I mean, he had something like that he'd say. You know, because it was sly. And Steve Toray, Ed Sherry, oh, man. The bass player. Don Lee, Pakito (phonetic sp.). Uh, Rivera. Rivera. What's Rivera (Indiscernible) Saxophone?

FEMALE: Mario.

Moody: Mario Rivera. Yeah. Mario. Dan Ilo (phonetic sp.). Ignacio Barrera. Yovani (phonetic sp.) Hildago (phonetic sp.). You know. Yeah, so it was nice. I enjoyed that. I was wonderful. Good music and it's even hipper now cause Slide has done some other arrangements on those things. And I've got Antonio Heart, David Sanchez along with the other guys. And who was the bass player? Who was the bass player on that?

Baker: So the band has stayed somewhat together? Or –

Moody: Somewhat. Yeah, but he's got – No. Pakito has that now. The United Nations.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: Now the jazz masters I have now.

Baker: Ah. For Slide.

Moody: That's it. Yeah. Uh-huh (affirmative).

Baker: When did Dizzy come up with the idea the United Nations Band?

Moody: I don't know. I really don't know when he came up with that.

Baker: But you were on the very first version of that.

Moody: I think I was.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: Yeah. I think I was because –

Baker: That was in what? Eighty –

Moody: I think that's when we came back from the tour of Africa. That's about all of five years ago almost.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And they built it. Five years. When –

FEMALE: It was in January of '89.

Moody: January. Yeah, see because when I came back then we got married. Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: And that was the band I saw you with at the Greek Theater in Los Angeles in '89.

Moody: That's right. And Linda, I mean and Michelle came. My daughter. Yeah.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative). Yeah, that's a great band.

Moody: Yeah. It was nice. Yeah. Yeah. It was hip. Yeah. Old Diazamat (phonetic sp.). Oh, and you know when I was talking about Deb before. You know that his horn was bent on his wife's birthday when he gave her a party. And there were two comedians. They were playing around, and they fell on the horn and bent it. And the horn bent in that forty-five degree angle. So he didn't want to bend it back down because the bell would have broken off. So he left it, and he blew it, and he liked the sound. So he had a horn made like that. And that was January 6, his wife's birthday. And he died on her birthday. Yeah.

Baker: Boy, that's something.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: You know, another thing that I think makes you very unusual in the group of highly accomplished players that you belong to is that across your career you've been both a leader and a side man again after you were a leader. So many guys once they make a reputation and become leaders of their own groups generally don't go back and work as a side man again. But yet you worked with Dizzy off and on all those years, and you worked with other artists.

Moody: Only Dizzy.

Baker: Only Dizzy. Okay.

Moody: I did it only with Dizzy.

Baker: Only with Dizzy?

Moody: And then Lionel Hampton had the golden men of jazz. I did only with them. But other than that, I don't like working, as they say, as a side man with somebody.

Baker: Right.

Moody: I'd like to, you know, like kind of do my own thing. I'll work with an all star thing. Yeah. And then when you say a side man thing, I think with the United Nations thing everybody were leaders almost. You know. Like that.

Baker: Right.

Moody: But I'd really much rather do my own thing. I'd rather. I only did that because of Dizzy. You know.

Baker: Sure. Sure. That's what I thought, but I wanted to hear you say that in your own words.

Moody: Yeah. Because you know, like I got things I'd like to do. And given the opportunity, I'd do them. You know.

Baker: Well, let's follow up on that.

Moody: Well, I'd do them, but the point is that you have to have finances to do it. I'd love to keep my group together and just go and work and do it. And we worked clubs, and people coming in enjoyed it. They enjoy it, but they always want to have me with somebody else. Like I go to Japan and work with Hamp (phonetic sp.) or with Dizzy. But if I want to take my group and go like that, I'm never there. Consequently, they've never really heard me play in Japan. Not really.

Baker: Why is that do you think?

Moody: Blessed are those that run wide in circles, for they shall be called big wheels. That's why. Everybody's got a concept. You know. And evidently I'm not included in that concept when it comes. You see. When you stop and think of it, I think of the White House.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: No. Never mind. Forget it. That's good.

Baker: It seems like everybody that's putting these packages together has their own agenda. They have people that they're using for whatever reason they decide to use it for.

Moody: If Dizzy were here, like and he's going, I'd be there.

Baker: Oh, you bet.

Moody: Yeah. You know. But other than that, I – You know. So that's, you know.

Baker: Yeah. Cause I've always wondered about that. We'd go to a festival or something, I'd think, "Well, where's Moody's group?" You know. How come they're not here?

Moody: Yeah. Sure. I know. Now they're putting me together with nine horns and funny, but you know. Bit deal. You know.

Baker: Yeah. That can't be musically a very satisfying experience.

Moody: It isn't. Because like they got to – You know. I like to play music, and I'm going to play what I want to play and the way I want to play it. You know. You play with groups and somebody well, "Let's do this, and we'll do it this way." Dizzy says, "Oh, okay. All right." Cause I'm one of those kind of guys. If I'm playing with a group of people, I just be quiet and let -- They got it. Go ahead. Or whatever it is I'll do it. You know. That's why when I get my own things, this is what I do.

Baker: Are you sponsored by a particular music instrument company right now?

Moody: No. I got to make a call. You know. I'm not sponsored by any company, but I'm going to make a call to Stan Garver (phonetic sp.). A sell man. I want to talk to him, cause I need a soprano.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: I going to get a sell man. You know. Now some other people have approached me, I mean I got to – But I want to use the sell man. I'm not going to say anything just yet.

Baker: I understand. The only reason I brought it up is that sometimes when these packages, tour packages and festival packages are being put together, sometimes record companies or instrument companies or other sponsors that are involved, if they have any say in it they bring in certain artists that are part of what they do. You know. And if you're not with one of those –

Moody: But you know what?

Baker: What?

Moody: A guy called me and he hasn't played in a long time. And he's just getting back and he's (Indiscernible) the book from Jamie and Pasal (phonetic sp.) so he can play. All right.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And a company is sponsoring him. Like they're endorsing him. They gave him instruments and everything. You know what I mean? See? Yup. Because he was in an orchestra years ago, and they remember when he was in orchestra. But I was in an orchestra years ago too. [laughs]

Baker: Right.

Moody: But then see, like I tell my honey. I said, "You know. I don't like to say that, because

anybody who gets a break I'm happy for them." You know.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And if they get one, I've got breaks too. Look, I got a wonderful wife, a wonderful family. You know. So, I'm blessed. You know what I mean? So I can't say, "Well, how come that can't happen to me." Hey, man. You know. I'm lucky. I just need to fight this. That's all. [laughs]

Baker: Well, I know one thing that a lot of people in the business, a lot of the musicians have found very disturbing in the past few years is the – And I want to say the perception simply to hedge my bet, because we all know that's what's happening. But that softens it a little bit when you say the perception is. That for the most part the record companies now rather than recording the established giants of the music are going out and look for young players that they can make into stars.

And I find that very disturbing when we have so many living masters who are still out and performing. And I'm not trying to take anything away from the young guys who are coming up, but it would be wonderful if guys who haven't had a record contract for a certain number of years would then have that kind of opportunity to be in the public eye and to have their recordings available again, what have you, out there.

Or even, like you were saying, going back and getting somebody who hasn't done anything for years. And saying, "Okay. Here's a guy. We can launch a big publicity campaign around the fact that he's coming back."

Moody: Here's what's happening. I would assume that they're going out for the young guys. And they can play. They sound good. But they can also get them cheaper. A lot of the older guys now, they've been around. And they're sick of hearing we're a small record company. We'd like – When they say, "We're a small record company." Right there they're telling you, "We're going to give you a small amount of money to record." And that's crap. They've got the money. Some of them have it. So how come they can't do it both ways? How come they can't do it with the young guys and do it for the older, more established guys and let them do something? You know.

But that's okay, because the Lord looks out for those who look out for themselves. And by that I mean by practicing I'll be looking out for myself. And I'm just going to practice, and when the time comes for me to, you know, play I just want to sound better than I did today than I did yesterday. You know. In all facets of playing. And that goes for every day to come. You know.

Baker: Well, you have such a positive attitude about life.

Moody: Well, let me – You know, Lida, I could look, and man, got the best excuse in the world. They're recording the young guys and they're not recording me. I'm pissed off about it. Why are they doing it? Hey man. I'm happy for the young guys. They need to get breaks too. Sure,

they're getting breaks quicker than I did. So what?

Like when I was with Dizzy, I wasn't making the money that the quintet made after I left. The guys got much more money than I got when I was with Dizzy's quintet. So I'm supposed to be pissed off about that. That's the way the times are. See. The money situation got better. And it got so, hey, good luck to you. Because I always figure I want everybody to make it as best they can. And by the same token, I want to work that out for myself so that I can get the best I can. And I don't want to put any negative thoughts out about anybody. Because when you do, it boomerangs and comes back to you. You see?

So all I want is good for everybody. You know. And then I just want to practice and do good for myself. God bless the child that's got his own.

Baker: True. True.

Moody: You know. So that's all I want to do. I just want to hold my own.

Baker: Were there any times in your career besides when you were at Overbrook that you weren't able to play, you weren't able to perform (Indiscernible)?

Moody: Oh, I didn't play in Overbrook because I didn't want to play.

Baker: Right.

Moody: Yeah. I just didn't want to play. You know, there are times that you don't want to play. There are times even now. I don't want to play. I just don't want to play. But that's good, because you know if you take something – I'll tell you what. Take four billion, drillion (phonetic sp.), zillion, digging dollars and just let it fall on you. Just keep falling on you every day. Every day, day, day, day. You know. Finally, if it stops you would say, "Oh, man it feels so good. It's a relief. I'm sick of that."

Now that's the money right? But I'm saying that that's how the music feels to me. It feels good like that. Like I'm assuming money coming in like that would feel. But the thing is is that you have to – It's coming in.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: I lost my point. What was I saying?

FEMALE: Can we cut now? Can we cut now please?

Moody: Don't they have --? The reason I don't feel like playing sometimes is because like you can become – You know. You can just smother yourself with things. And sometimes it's good to back off and cool it for a minute. And then look at things. Like with David's book. You know, with your husband's book. Sometimes I'll look at something, and it doesn't sink. And I know I just have to cool it. Then I come back the next day and look at it, and it's like an old

friend. Got it. You know what I mean?

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And that's the way things are. Like you know, people don't understand that you have to back off from no matter what it is you're doing. Even if you love it that much, you have to back off for a minute. Just take a rest and then go back. And when you do, it seems like it just unfolds much more advantageous stuff to you.

So there are many times when I don't feel like practicing. And many times that I don't play, and when I go back I play something that I hadn't played in a long time, and it's for the better. I've never not played and then gone back and it wasn't a good experience.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative). So you have had – I'm sorry.

Moody: It's always been a positive experience and good every time I've gone back.

Baker: So you have had some periods where you've just laid off for a little while and given yourself time.

Moody: Yeah. But when I lay off – I mean when I lay off it's about two or three days.

Baker: Right.

Moody: I don't mean – [laughter] No. I don't mean like you know a month or something.

Baker: Like take a month.

Moody: Oh, no. No.

Baker: Like Sonny Rawlins. Take a year off or two years or something.

Moody: Well, if he took a year off, but he took a year off the practice. That's the difference. I mean, I'd love to be able to do that. Like I said before, if I ever get a chance. Any kind of a grant, Ulysses S. Grant or any kind of grant [laughs]. I'm going to get that grant, and I'm going to study with David. Yup. You know what I mean?

Baker: I understand that you were ill for a while too. You had Bell's palsy?

Moody: Bell's palsy. It was a form of paralysis. And I had it on this side I think. And I think I had it on this side too maybe a little bit. But I had it when I was with Dizzy. And we were out at the lighthouse in Hermosa Beach in Los Angeles. And it hit me one night when we were getting ready to open up at a club. And little by little man, it just – I couldn't play my horn. So I couldn't play for a while. I forgot how long it was, but it was a good little while. Michelle, my daughter, she was oh, maybe six months old. Something like that. Six, seven months. Something like that.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative). So that's when you were with the quintet.

Moody: Yeah. And Bernard Igner (phonetic sp.). You know that song [sings] everything much change. Nothing [stops singing] – He's the gentleman that wrote that song. He's the guy that took my place for a while. Dizzy took a singer with him. So Bernard Igner, he was singing with Dizzy.

And then when I got better I went back. You know. They said, "Moody. It doesn't make any difference. You just play what you can play and what you can." Cause I could play like – (scatting – gets louder and then fades out) You know. It would come and go. I'd play (scatting). You know. Had to wait for a minute. Then I'd (scatting). It would – And little by little it came back.

Baker: So you still kept working across that time even though you were ill.

Moody: No. No. I was ill, and then when I felt like I could hold a note I went back with Dizzy. And Dizzy says, "Moody, play what you can play. When you can't play, then don't."

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: That's right. Because I couldn't play when I had it. I had to take the electrode treatment to try to pull the jaw back. I mean, I had no control over my lip. My eye was closed, I mean open and I couldn't close it. So I had to wear a patch. Yeah.

Baker: That must have been a very challenging experience.

Moody: Well, it was challenging, but it was frightening too. But it's frightening now when I look back, because I didn't realize that it could have stayed that way. But see I always was a positive person, so I feel good about that. You know. Like my mother. Her word for that is you got to learn how to cope. You got to cope. That was her. Well, you got to cope. That's what she's doing now too. Coping. Yeah.

Baker: We didn't really talk much about your years in Canada yesterday. What kinds of things you were doing. What kind of groups you were working with up there.

Moody: I was in Canada. I had a relationship with a person in Canada, and that relationship with the person in Canada owned a boutique shop up there. And it was one of those things where it was a good lesson for me, a good experience. Because see when you have different experiences like that, it makes you appreciate much more when you got a gem. You know. You know. I got a gem, boy. And I know what I have. Mainly because I was in another predicament before.

Baker: Was it difficult living out of the country for those three years? That was what? '85, '88.

Moody: Canda is like an extension of America.

Baker: Is it?

Moody: Yeah. Yeah. It's an extension. Snow up to your eyeballs, you know, in the wintertime and warm in the summertime. You know, people are pleasant.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: People are pleasant everywhere. It depends on you, like I said yesterday. You know. It depends on how people treat you by the way you are. And so it was all right. But most of all like I met some nice people up there. And like it was a good experience for me. And I'm glad it happened, because it like – I can really appreciate what I've got now. You know?

Baker: Were you working mostly with a small group up there?

Moody: No. No. I wasn't working in Canada. See, it doesn't make any difference where I live Lida. I still work on the road.

Baker: Ah, I see what you're saying. Okay.

Moody: So, I mean I was still traveling. I'd be in Europe, Japan. You know. So that's what that was.

Baker: That was pretty much a time when you were active with your own group or also with other artists?

Moody: Same as now. Same as now.

Baker: Same as now?

Moody: I'd go with a group or I'd go as a single. It's always been that way, man. And I've just loved to be able to go with my group. You know. You know. Because there are guys that I know, like I've got an inkling about them and they know what I like. And we do the – You know. Dizzy enjoyed them. He really enjoyed playing with the group. You know.

So, but people, man. The people enjoy them when we play. But it's for some reason, man, they – Gees. So sick man. They always, you know, they put me with different rhythm sections and things. It's okay, but damn man. You know. You know, I like to have my own thing. Like hand-me-downs. You know. Here. Wear these. Take this. Put this on. Do this. And that doesn't mean that other people can't –

You know, you can put four names together. You know, a rhythm section and a horn player, and they won't necessarily sound good. You know, because like people – That's why when people play, people choose who they want. You know. Like that's why they have supermarkets so you can walk in and choose. Do I want an orange? An apple? A banana? Or do I want, you know, a grapefruit? I want a pistachio nut. You know. They're well here. Just sit down. We're going

to give you what you want. Here. Here's a cucumber. I don't want one now. I want a – That's all you got to do.

They're okay, well what do you want to do? Well, slice this. You know. [laughter] Yeah. Yup. So, but I'm still forcing it. So, there you go.

Baker: When you left Dizzy in 1946 and made some recordings with Howard McGee and Milt Jackson –

Moody: 1946?

Baker: It was in 1946. I just remember reading that in '47 that you made these recordings with Howard McGee and Milt Jackson, and that's just basically all they say is just boom, boom. That's it right there. I was wondering if those were recordings that you felt were important in your career. People that you –

Moody: I didn't feel anything of that was important because in the first place I had no idea what was going on. And you know, it's a funny thing. Like if someone were to say to you when you first started playing, when you first started doing whatever you did, somebody said, "Did you feel that was important?" I mean, we were just doing it. Somebody called you, "Hey, we want you to do a (Indiscernible)." Good. Bam. It's oh, boy. This is going to be important because I'm an old man. This is going – You know what I mean.

Did you know how important it is? You were with Dizzy when he passed. I joined the band. I had no idea about anything. Demonius (phonetic sp.) Muncle (phonetic sp.) was there. Penny Clark Clook (phonetic sp.) was there. You know what I mean? But John Lewis joined the band after. Ray Brown. Milt Jackson. No idea.

And if I would have known, if you would have known then I probably would have messed up or something. I mean, you know. Not that I didn't mess up. But you know. So you don't know.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: Like the guys say, "Well, when he was born did you know he was going to do --?" You don't know those things. You just do something, and then when you look back you say, "Oh, that happened." Oh, great. You know.

Baker: Well, I know you've still got some things you'd really like to do. If somebody were to just hand you a blank check and say, "Moody, now for the next five years whatever you want to do I'll underwrite anything you want to do."

Moody: Well, you know what I'd really would want to do. Like I hate to say me first, but if I could get a blank check I'd have to do me first, because what I would want to do is I want to study. But then while I'm studying I would also like to be able to help some kids that didn't have anything. Nothing. Some kid that I saw that, you know, that even though it looked like they might not have talent, they would want to play, you know, or do something.

And because of that, I'd like that. See, if something's given to me, I want to learn. See, because I'm funny. I don't want to take something and don't give back. If you give me one, I want to give you two. You know. So that's what I'd love to do. I'd love to study. I'd love to be able to study and you know, they'd take care of my family. I don't have to worry about that responsibility. But really practice. You know, arranging. Study flute, saxophone, clarinet. You know, study. And then go out and play. You know. Uh-huh (affirmative). That's what I'd love to do.

Baker: Sounds like a great plan.

Moody: Yeah. Well.

Baker: I would just find somebody with a blank check.

Moody: Yeah. Well, no. That's okay. I won't find anybody. Like, you know, the Lord helps those. Like even with gambling, you know, I'll probably hit the sweepstakes, the lotteries. [laughter] I'll probably hit it. And it probably came from being in Wales with a bunch of cows. Now you want to know what that means?

Baker: Yeah. [laughs]

Moody: Well, we saw some cows with some numbers on their ears. And I'm going to play those numbers.

Baker: Oh. [laughs]

Moody: Yeah. You know how they got the tag on the collars (Indiscernible).

Baker: Right. Right.

Moody: And I just figured if I did it, that's what I'm going to do.

Baker: That's great. I love it.

Moody: Yup. Going to move from here. Go and you know, do some other things. Right honey? Yeah. And then, yeah. But I really like this. I'd really like to help some kids, especially some kids that are fooling around with rock music. I'd like to get to them and show them that they've got to – If they learn some music, then they'll see that what they're doing is nothing but just wasting time, you know, with some unknowledgeable stuff. Feed them a little knowledge. A little knowledge begets the want for more knowledge, you know.

And then when they start learning, they might become a pain in the butt. "Moody, how do you do this? Let me show –" But then I'd love that, because then I'd learn, you know. But like (Indiscernible) Danny. My son, man. He and his brother Reed, you know they loved it lush. And then when he started taking some lessons he began to see.

You see, it's always better when you start learning about something that you don't know anything about. You learn about it, then you understand a little better what's going on with that person. That's why if people started learning about music, I think I'd be accepted a little better. You know. They learn because they can see, "Well, gees. Trying to play something." Rather than, you know.

And the funny thing is is like you take these younger musicians and they're playing and they sound beautiful. And I play with them and they say, "Oh, boy. You can play." Yeah. Well sure. But there's other things to play too. You know. So –

Baker: It's exciting to see you excited about teaching as well as performing. You know there are a lot of guys who are active performers who don't feel the way you do about passing things on and what have you, or don't feel comfortable in either a workshop environment or an academic environment working with young players. But yet I've watched you do workshops over the years where you seem to be very comfortable and really enjoy having the opportunity to pass on what you know to young kids who are coming up.

Moody: You know what's a nice feeling? To see a light come on in a kid's face. That's a good feeling. It's almost as good as being paid. [laughter] It really is. To see that light come on. You see, because first of all when I was coming up, I had some teachers and not one time did a light ever come on for me. And the one guy that made the light come on, he upped and died. You know.

So like anytime I can make a light come on, not only for music, but any other kind of way, it really makes me feel good. You know.

Baker: Who was the guy who made the light come on for you?

Moody: That's just the point. I can't think of his name now, because Mike Lungo recommended him to me. But he – I can't think of his name. But he died from peritonitis. Now isn't that something? You know.

Baker: In this day and age?

Moody: Yeah. Yeah.

Baker: That's so sad.

Moody: Yeah. Peritonitis. Forgot what his name was now. Oh, man. I'll find out from Mike and let you know, cause you know. But he was, "Ha. Look at him. James Moody. Moody mood for love. Didn't I tell you you move this note here to this one and it goes here? How dumb can you be?" And my mother's in the living room listening to this. And she's getting pissed off, and I'm dying laughing, boy, cause I'm loving every minute of it. And he's socking it to me, but I'm getting it. You know. What was his name? Oh, man.

I told you about that? Right honey? It was nice though, cause you know a mother. I mean, "Oh,

look. Everybody's out of step except my son." Twenty million guys walking, you know. [laughter] So, oh man. I can't think of his – But anyway. But that's it. So I like – And I've got more than one way to show something to somebody too. You know.

You know there are a lot of people there that are, "Look. Here it is. One and one. That's two." That says, "I don't get it." "Well do it this way. One and one. How about one and one." I mean there's so many ways you can show somebody something. At least that's the way I feel about it. And there's so many books that are written that are this thick, you know. Two and a half inches thick and the book could be just one-half inch thick with what's in the book that's really like they're trying to tell you. All the other stuff is superfalut (phonetic sp.) stuff with a guy beating around the bush trying to impress you with what you know.

Time. Well, what is time? Well now you see, many years ago there was a clock. [laughter] In the eyes of a man who had never seen one. Come on, man. What kind of time you mean? The time of a clock or musical time or time – You know what I mean? Let's get down to the business.

That's another thing. People start talking about things and you never knew what they're talking about, because when they say something it has twenty meanings. You know? And another thing, they took too long to say what they're going to say. Like what time is it? Three o'clock. You know. What time is it? Well, now I put my watch on this morning, and when I did I thought to myself, "Are the hands moving?" And I looked, and sure enough it was. And then I said to myself, "I wonder why they put one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, twelve." What time is it please? "Oh, one moment. [laughter] And so if I looked at it – Oh, hold it a minute. The baby's crying." (scatting) And an hour later he tells you, "Oh, it's three o'clock." Now it's four o'clock. You know. So, oh, man.

And people are like that about life. You know. And about that on time too. Oh, wait a minute. I'm doing this. I'm doing – Oh, I got to get a – Why don't you do that two hours before. Then you don't have to be that, you know, like when it comes time to do whatever it is you're supposed to do. Guy says, "Oh, man. I'm sorry I'm late man. You know, I was going –." I said, "Oh, I don't want to hear it man. Don't tell me nothing." You know.

The only time your late is if you drop dead or something, then that's an excuse. Other than that, if you know there's going to be traffic, don't "Oh, I got caught in traffic." No. I'm never late because I know if I got to go somewhere it doesn't just take 15 minutes. It might take 15 minutes to get there, but how about if you have a flat tire? Okay. So say that's 45 minutes. Okay, so now that's 45. That's an hour. All right?

Now how about if there's an accident? So that could be a half hour maybe.

[Begin CD #6]

Moody: So just make another 45 minutes, so when you go somewhere – You got to be there at one, be there at what? Eleven-thirty. You know. Be there. That's nice just to be there. And then see things too, you know. When you go somewhere a little early, you know, different

things happen. And you say, "Oh, boy." You know. You can meditate and think. I'm so tired of running through airports. I can't see straight. I mean, you know. O.J. Simpson, man. That's me through the airport. Mainly because somebody in the group was late and you've got to wait. Well, we got to wait for everybody.

That's another thing. I hate waiting for anybody. That's why I like to have my ticket and go. (scatting) You're gone. You know. Where – Gone. Apparently he's gone. That's it. Cause I like to do what I got to do. And then I want my time for myself. But then when you make all my time yours, now you're messing with me, because I can't use that. And that's what they do. They wait. Somebody's late. I say, "Look. All you got to do is say the bus is leaving at ten o'clock. Okay? At ten o'clock the bus pulls off." Not, "The bus is leaving is ten." At ten o'clock here comes everybody down. Now the bus leaves at a quarter of eleven. You see? And I hate that with a passion. And it's always just two or three guys, you know, or women that do that. Because we have some singers, you know, or something.

You know like, "Oh. Well, I'm going to the same place. And we've got time." No. You've got your time, but you're wasting mine now, because I don't want to sit here waiting for your behind. I want to get where I'm going so I can do – I might want to walk through the airport, look at something. I don't want to wait on your butt. You know.

So when you leave – So what I do is I go – If I can, I go with the baggage first. I just go, [sings] bam. [stops singing] And I'm there. Now let everybody else stand around and wait for somebody lolly gagging. "Oh, man I – Damn, you know I couldn't wake up. Oh, it's heavy." Big deal. You know, I woke up. You know. So anyway.

What has that got to do with music? Everything. Because in the first place, you listen to this. When you listen to people that do things like that, they sound just like that too, you know. People that are late and do things, like all that goes along with their plan.

Baker: Would you like to talk about the Phillip Morris tour that you did?

Moody: Yeah, the Phillip Morris tour was the Phillip Morris tour and they had cigarettes, and what they did was they had two buses. One for smokers and one for non-smokers, because Phillip Morris also makes juices and baby food. That's the part I work for. You know.

Baker: Ah.

Moody: A thing that I didn't particular care for with the Phillip Morris band was that you have to wear tuxedos. I think it's stupid, because everybody doesn't play the same, so how come you got to look the same? You're wearing these tuxedos. Looks like somebody died. [laughter] You know, when I put them on I say, "Well, where's the casket?" You know. But I – Linda met me on the tour. We honeymooned in Egypt. That was nice about it though. You know. We honeymooned in Cairo. And it was nice seeing like Ralph Moore and Dallas Morgan. You know. Mike Marthman (phonetic sp.). Those guys. It was nice being with them.

Baker: So it was an all star band.

Moody: Well, it was a big band. I mean it was just a band. I mean, you know. An all star band, and we – Gene Harris' band. And it was like uh, -- Well, it was like a band backing up the singers and also backing up whoever played. You know. So, you know, the piano player would play, and we'd back that up. And then maybe they'd play a blues and the saxophones would play. And Ray would play something, and the band would back that up.

Baker: So everybody in the band was essentially a soloist as well then?

Moody: Um.

Baker: No, not really?

Moody: Well, I mean, everybody in the band took a solo. We'll put it that way. But they, you know, like – I've got a tenor, alto, flute and soprano. Like I played tenor in the band.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: So, but I mean that's what it was. Because Gene told me at first, he said, "Joe, I want people and you bring all your instruments, because I'd like people to play them all." You know. We'd play them all.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And I wound up playing tenor. I mean, that was it. You know. Se la vi. You know. [laughter]

Baker: So essentially that was the case of a sponsor saying I'll underwrite this tour for this particular group. And how long a tour was it?

Moody: Oh, we did a couple, a few of them.

Baker: Ah.

Moody: We did – We went from – We went to Russia and went all over the Philippines. All over Europe. I don't think we did Asia. The closest we got was the Philippines. And it was pleasant seeing all the guys. You know, like Frank Weston and Jerry Dogin (phonetic sp.). You know, but then mostly like with the tour we played for B.B. King, and we played for a girl. I saw her yesterday. I showed you the picture.

FEMALE: Diane Reeves?

Moody: Diane Reeves. Yeah. Diane Reeves. It was nice. You know, like, you know. Basically, that's what it was. Basically, it was a band playing for people. That's what it was. It wasn't like Sad and Mel.

Baker: All right. So you were playing behind –

Moody: It wasn't like Sad and Mel playing music. I mean, you know, like playing some things and then band playing. You know. When the band would play, we'd play like Old Man River or you know. I think Gary played Lover. You know.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: We played the blues, you know. (Indiscernible). You know.

Baker: So what's coming up for you now? What kinds of things will you be doing in the next year or couple of years?

Moody: Well, I'm hoping, because like I'm practicing. I'm hoping I'll be able to keep my group together and do something with my group. I'd love to do some of those tours with my group and play my own thing so people could hear me play what I play.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: You know. Like, you know. Cause every time it's always, you know. What it's like, it's like two people giving a speech. You know. You know. Or three people giving a speech or four people. (Indiscernible). You got a chorus. You got two choruses. You got a chorus. You got a rhythm. That's okay. But I'm quite sure everybody wants to do something of his own. He just wants to do it. And that's what I'd like to do.

I've been on Phillip Morris, about four or five of them. And every time I'm with someone, playing with someone, doing someone and I'm always like I'm there. You know. But I'd like to be there with my thing once rather than being there with other people's things. I mean, that's about the size of that. And I'm quite sure everyone can understand that.

Baker: You bet.

Moody: You know. You know. So, you know. [laughs]

Baker: Well, I'm wondering if there are people or experiences or things that have happened to you across your life that we really haven't touched on. Something that you would like to talk about that we really haven't touched on.

Moody: Such as? I mean, you said it, but I don't know. Because right now, like I'm just kind of fed up with, you know, just with T.V. and the movies. I'm fed up with people in general. Mainly because, like I said before, the minority and the majority thing.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: And the minority is intelligence. And the majority is ignorant. I'm sick of it. I really am. You know. I look on the T.V. and there are people talking about each other's mother. And

people are laughing thinking it's fun. There are people rhyming about blowing somebody's brains out. You know. I mean, you know, like this person is no good because his eyes are slanted. This one's no good because his hair is nappy. This one is wonderful because he's got gold teeth.

I mean, excuse me. I've got to say this. Honey, forgive me. But it's a bunch of shit. I'm sick of it all. You know. Just the damn government. I mean, and you know. I'm sorry. It's just ignorance, ignorance, ignorance. And the people are just wallowing in it. You know? And the worse part about it is people going for it.

The worse thing that bugs me with ignorance are people going for that stuff. Like people like Rush and those groups and all these kids go for that crap. You know. That kind of stuff. I mean, it's sickening. You know. Like the heavy metal and all that.

Baker: Yeah.

Moody: You know. Jesus. Tattoos here and there. And pin put through it all. Oh, man. You know, that's the same as Sodom and Gomorra. That's the same way like things happen, because you know because people are catering to their senses. You know. And the senses really don't mean that much if you don't rise them above animal level. You know? So, and you put all that together.

You know what it's like? It's like a barrel full of rotten apples. And you take a nice apple and you put it in there. I'm not saying I'm a nice apple, but I'm saying, "Man. I don't want to be rotten." You know. So don't put me in there, but I'm here. [laughter] What am I going to do? You know. Turn rotten like everybody else? Or stand my ground? I got to do like my mother told me, because through the years and experience I find that the way I feel and what I think is right, for me. You know. Even though it's written in the book that some thing that men think alike will lead them to the gateways of hell.

What I'm saying is, "Man, I can't use it good." I mean, the whole system is going to go to hell. This whole system. Because the whole system is based on hooray for me and F you. You know? Okay, what can you do for me? You do this, and then I'll see that this is done for you. Okay? And if we see that this is done for you, then you'll have to see that this is done for us. And we can't – Hey. No. God said, "Help those that can't help themselves."

Medicine. We will go through the darkness and the storm of the night to help the sick. The hippocrates oath, shucks. You find a doctor man. You go to a doctor. First of all, the doc will say, "Let me know what time you're going to get sick." Okay. "All right. I think I'll be sick next month at twelve o'clock." "Good. All right. We'll be waiting for you."

You get there at twelve o'clock. [mumbles] "Okay. How are you going to pay for it?" [mumbles] "All right. Get his card and make sure he can pay for it and get him in." And you go on in and the doctor (Indiscernible), "What seems to be the trouble?" You know. Mister God. Know all. You see. You got all that, and people are going for that crap.

I bought some medicine. No, my honey did the other day. You know. A hundred tablets. A hundred pills. Now I'm not even going to say it. Tell her how much it cost honey.

FEMALE: It was approximately a hundred and thirty dollars.

Moody: I can tell you exactly. A hundred and thirty-six dollars and twenty-nine cents. [laughter] Okay. For high blood pressure medicine. You see? Pharmaceutical companies, the ones who got your interests at heart. [laughter] They want to really fix it for you so you can be well. Just like Kobe and Meyers, the lawyers. They say, what do they say? If you think pork is cheap, trying hiring a lawyer. [laughter] You know.

I mean, just everybody. Like there's nothing in this country from the professional standpoint that has to do with dealing with human beings.

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: It's all dealing with dollars. Our money. Everything. Give me some money and I'll do that for you. Don't give me no money, that's it. You know. It's almost the same as when you were down south. If you were a Negro and you got sick in a white district and they were right in front of the hospital, you still had to wait until they came for you in the ambulance to take you to the black hospital. You know. You couldn't go. And you know about that, right? You know. And you know about that, honey. Right? Yeah.

FEMALE: Just from you telling me.

Moody: Yeah. So, and then you think about all this. And then you go outside and people, "Have a good day." If they kiss my behind. Have a good day. You know. You don't mean it. People go to church. [sings] "Oh, Jesus. Oh, Glory. Oh, Jesus loves me. [stops singing] Yes. Oh, thank you very – Thank you Lord." And then come right out and call you a nigger. You know. Or call somebody else something. You know.

They think that you go to church and you're cleansed of your sins. Now you can start all over again. It doesn't go that way man. You know. You got to clean your insides. Clean yourself first. Clean your mind, the way you think. Clean your kid's mind. Quit poisoning your kid's mind, cause you're getting them so that they're going to be messed up. You know. I mean, it's – America is a dirty, conniving, funky government. The country is. And it comes from the government. And everybody under disguise of being peaceful and nice and everything.

You go to anyplace in America in this rolling, beautiful hill and mountains and things, and you're going to see somebody with a tattoo and some teeth knocked out and a motorcycle who wants to mess up somebody, because they haven't got a stick of pot or a couple sniffs of cocaine or a bottle of whiskey. You know.

And there's a reason for that. And you know the reason for it? Lies. The country lies about everything. If there was peacefulness in the government and they really had God in mind first, then there wouldn't be nothing in people's mind but love of self, love of humanity. This way,

there's love, supposedly, of the flag. [scatting] The flag? You gonna mess up my flag? Okay. But how about God. That's what's important. You know.

I mean, who fixed it so everything that's here could be made? The flag or God? You know. And all that pertains to music. And the music – You can tell the music. Whichever kind of music you can hear, you can tell what kind of person is around, too. You know. [making sounds like a guitar playing] You got an idea of that person. Or [singing slowly] you can tell. Or [singing upbeat sounds]. You know what? That's okay. But you can tell. You know. And the more profound the music, the more like depth in the person's mind that's listening to it. And the more mediocre the music, the more you got ignorance. And all that goes together. Ignorance goes with ignorance. And a little mind thinking goes with mind thinking. What comes again to my saying, birds of a feather flock together. And they don't come in different colors or anything. I mean, one – I mean, because all people are the same.

So you might find Chinese, Italian, German. But every so called different culture likens the same thing. You know. Because there's ignorance everywhere. So, the ignorant this person and that person, they all hang together. They come in with different views. But ignorance hangs together and so does intelligence. And I'd rather be with something that's intelligence, because that goes. That goes up. Ignorance goes down. One goes to God. The other goes to the devil.

Baker: Can we stop just for a minute?

Moody: Lida, you know there's something funny. People always say the good that men do have often turned their bones. And the evil lives after them. In the case of musicians, it seems as if people want to say how great they were or how great they could have been if they were still living. So if you stop now and you look. What if there had never been a Dizzy Gillespie? What if there had never been a Louie Armstrong. What if there had never been a Roy Eldridge? What if there had never been a Kumen (phonetic sp.) Hawken (phonetic sp.)? Where would the music business be? Not the business, but where would music be? What if there had never been a Bix (phonetic sp.) Bita Bix or a Benny Goodman or a Jimmy Dorsey or Charlie Barnett?

So when you put all this together, I think that the people in the record companies and the people in the music business, period, they should really say, "Now wait a minute. We're paying a lot of homage and stuff, you know, to all these different rock performers and these heavy metal things and these blues performers. And the really wonderful, great music is coming from not only the classical but the jazz people that did the things to make jazz what it is today.

So now you can't exactly throw that away, because each day and each musician is carrying something from one of those musicians that I spoke of. Okay? So now because of that, like people have to start remembering. Wait a minute. We are not looking at the importance of a music that is endeared or that is American as apple pie.

Now, because it has nothing to do with race. It transcends race. It has to do – Although, I said before there's only one race. What it is is it has to do with intelligence and growing musically and making our ears become more educated. Okay? So, in that, I think people should start then – You have some musicians that are still here such as your Sweets Edison. Your Ruby Braff

(phonetic sp.). Your Clark Terry. Your Juan Vashe (phonetic sp.). Okay. Your Howard Lans (phonetic sp.). You know. Okay.

So start thinking for something for those guys and start thinking about something for your Roy Eldridges and your Louie Armstrongs and your Dizzy Gillespies. You know. Your John Fatuses. I mean, start thinking and I think it would put, people who listen to music, their minds into different perspectives whereby they would say, "Wait a minute. We still have some of the treasures here, so let's do something about it." The ones that we didn't do anything about, let's look back and analyze all that. And let's don't make that mistake again, because Dizzy didn't get all his just dues. Nor did Roy Eldridge or – I mean, Bix Bit a Bix. Any of the jazz musicians. So I think that if you look at that and start letting people know more about the history and also the present, maybe, just maybe their minds might start being mature enough to grasp the importance of the so-called jazz music. You know?

Baker: Well, the fact that it changed at the end of the swing era from being almost mainstream popular music of the time to then becoming a music of greater complexity and appreciated by people who could appreciate music of greater subtlety and complexity may have something to do with the fact that people clamber to hear the music from the '30s and the early '40s. A lot of the big band things. And yet they don't want to move beyond that and see this wonderful, complex, very subtle music that's developed since that time.

Moody: The reason they don't want to move is because if you look at it, where will they go after that? They will go to the – Dizzy Gillespie, his band. Duke Ellington's band. Comp Basie (phonetic sp.), Thad Jones, Mel Louis. Okay? But you have to remember that during that time you heard your Jimmy Dorsey's. You heard that band. You heard Tommy Dorsey's band. You heard Charlie Barnett's band. You heard the Glen Miller's band. You heard Benny Goodman's band.

You turn the radio on and you heard one of those band. Okay? You turn the radio on today, how many times will you heard Dizzy Gillespie's band? How many times will you heard Duke Ellington playing? How many times will you hear Comp Basie's band playing? How many times will you hear Thad Jones and Mel Louis? I mean if you hear them once, it's a miracle. So what it is is that, you see, like I said before. Environment plays a big part, because if you're around something, if it's there, you start becoming attached to it one way or the other. Okay? Now, on the radio, on television, everywhere you listen, they do not play any music that has any substance to it other than the music stuff that they have. And that's it. Okay.

And that's why I say that everything's a big lie because if I give you what I think you want, I'm lying to you. But if I give you something because I know it's good. I know it's good, and you can learn something from it, I'm being truthful to you. Now if there's a guy that just – Like if you take a guy that plays King Oliver, and he really thinks you can learn something from that, and he really enjoys it. Okay. That's different. But most of the managers and people that produce the shows for all the radio shows, they know nothing about music other than the dollar signs coming into the studio for the advertisements.

Okay. So they don't care what you play as long as it makes money for the station. But if you

take a station that says, "I want to make money for the station, but I also want to be honest and give the people some – What's the word I'm looking for? I want to give them something that's – I mean something that is the best thing that you can get. What's that word I'm trying to say? I want to give them some superior products. Okay. I want to give them a superior musical product. All right.

And one would be Thad Jones, Mel Louis band. It was a new concept in a way big bands would sound. You know. Okay? And where did that come from? It came from, and then would have some like the Dizzy Gillespie's, or your Duke Ellington's. You know what I'm trying to say? And if they did that, then the people's ear would be used to hearing some music with some substance to it. But what's happening, unfortunately, people are being subjected to a bunch of non-musical, nonsensical music. Okay. Played by nonsensical musicians. Like what Buddy Rich said. He said, "Rock and roll is played by morons for imbeciles." [laughter] You know. Something like that.

And man, I mean – You know, good rock and roll is played by jazz musicians I would venture to say. I mean, musicians that have learned. See, because there's good rock and roll. But rock and roll can be improved upon like any type of music. So if it's going to be played, the better the musician, the better the rock and roll because they want to play something.

Like Rush. If they went to school and started studying something, then maybe they would play some music other than singing some so-called profound thing about like a beautiful story with some inferior music with two cords in mute position. You know. Or if they do move it it would be in the first inversion, and that's about the size of it from what I heard. You know. So like the people really need to be educated musically. And the only way they can be educated is to educate the ear. And how do you do it? By surrounding the people with good music. You know. And good music is music with substance to it, not one cord banging and the drums banging out loud. People need to know what beautiful melodies are. And when people sing the melodies, they need to sing the melody rather than like – Cause these singers that would sing like [sings] Oh, say can you see. [stops singing] To me, I don't like that melody cause it's not a good one.

But if you're going to sing a melody – [sings off tune] Oh, can you say.] [stops singing] What has that got to do with [sings] bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. [stops singing] And they do that with beautiful melodies like [singing] the shadow of your smile. [stops singing and hums] [sings off tune] when you -- Man. [scatting and singing]. You know. Music. Not [yells]. You know. I'm sick of that. You know. I'm sick of that whooping and hollering. [scatting] Hey, man.

There are other ways to do that. Do it on something pretty, but do it musically. And how do you do that? Learn about music. See, because that's caveman singing, I call it. I'm singing what I feel. Well, I mean how much can you feel when you have no knowledge? You can't feel too much can you. Yeah. If you get a little knowledge and feel some more. That's all I'm saying. That's what we need really. Education. Not only in music but everything. Education and understanding. Reasoning. You know. Education and truthful education. Not the lies. Because people like all the history in the history book. All a bunch of crap. You know. And a lot of it, it

really doesn't matter. If I go to the store and say, "Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth president. Now give me a loaf of bread." They say, "Well, where's your money?" [laughter] No, no, no. Teach something that's valid today. What's valid? What would be good is like love of yourself first. If you learn to respect yourself and get some education, learn to respect others. You know. Find God. And if you can't find him, get someone that has found Him so he can help you find Him. Him or her.

You know, start trying to do other things, and quit hanging with your buddies who you think know everything trying to tell you what's hip. Smoking reefer and smoking cigarettes and drinking beer. Quit that. You know. Start trying to better yourself in every way. You know. And your cleanliness. Take a bath every day. Clean your butt, because you know that helps too. Bathe. Eat right. You know. And if you do, you start thinking right.

Because the first thing, it all comes from the head, you know. You got to think right before you can be right. You know. If you do that, things start looking a little better.

Baker: And who would you say in your life have been the people who have really helped you learn what you needed to know in terms of the things that have been important to you, both as a musician and as a person?

Moody: Well, first of all I got to say this way. Fortunately, I think, and unfortunately, I had to learn one way. A hard way. By taking an overdose of benzedrine when I was younger. Okay. When I was in Dizzy's band in Detroit. But then again, I wised up. And now I learn from other people's mistakes. And it's the wise person who learns. Say okay. You learned from another person's misfortune. It's hip when you say, "Okay. I'm sorry for that person, but I'm going to make sure I don't do that." Okay?

So I've learned from lots of musicians who are no longer here now because they did certain things that took them away. And what I try to do is pass all my stuff on not by saying anything, but just by doing. You know? Like, you know, don't do what I say. Like, do what you see me do. You know. Because some people – Like you were talking about eating right. Yeah. I eat right. But sometimes I mess up. And I've messed up for quite a long while now, and I've got to get myself back together.

And when I really mess up, that's when you know I'm getting on the track to say, "All right. That's it. No more." You know. But like I learn from other people's mistakes, and – You see, because I can't say who told me like not to do this, because now like I'm the old guy. You know. Before, I used to be the young guy in the band. Now I'm pop. You know.

So, but it's nice to be able to – I don't say anything to the younger musicians unless I really see one of them really doing something. Like I saw one – You know. Like I could see he was kind of staying a little stimulated. A little stimulus that he didn't need. So I kind of said something. You know. It wasn't any of my business, but then again it was in a way. I think it rubbed off a little bit. You know.

But, cause sometimes you say things to people, and they say they want to live their own life. But

you can't say that, because you're not living your own life. Oh, look. I'm living my – Uh-uh (negative). You're living your life for your family. See because if you don't have a family and you're just by yourself, then you're living your life. You see? Because whether you know it or not, your family, they think about you. You know. They worry. They're concerned about whether you – Well, you know.

So you can't live your life. You got to live for the family. Say, "Oh, he's cool. I don't have to worry about that. Whew. Now I can go here." You know?

Baker: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Moody: So, but sometimes it takes some other kind of stuff to happen to get a person to wise up. And sometimes it's too late. And then sometimes they get through it with the skin of their teeth. So it's time for everybody to wise up.

Baker: Did you feel like you'd sort of gotten a second chance when you recovered, once you recovered and went to Paris?

Moody: Fifty-nine thousand second chances.

Baker: Yeah?

Moody: Sure. You know. Sure. I mean, every time I get on a plane. Every time – I mean, I'm – You know. I'm fortunate. You know? Like I tell the boys. You know, they're, "Well, I've got time. I've got my life." I say, "Look man. Quit that crap about you got time. You don't know what you've got." You know. "Like just because you're 24 years old, you think you got for 25." You don't know. A car could hit you tomorrow. Anything could happen tomorrow. So do every day the best you can and do something to try to grow as much as you can incase you're here tomorrow. You know.

Young kid, the first thing, "Oh, well I got my life." I says, "Hey. Wait a minute." You know. I never said it because like when you're young you think you're -- Man. I mean, I'll always be there. You know. But – [laughs] You better think again. You know. And I didn't become sixty-eight being dumb. I mean, you know. I mean I'm dumb but not stupid. [laughs]

Baker: Are there any people that you'd like to pay tribute to for posterity?

Moody: Everybody. All the musicians. Dizzy, Jon Faddis. You know. Slide Hampton. You know. Just everybody. All the guys, man. You know. I appreciate them all. You know. If it was my way I could pay tribute to them all. I think Dizzy. Yeah. David. I mean, yeah. You know what I mean? Jamie. You know. Yeah. Especially, like I like intelligence you know. Yeah. Yeah. I really did. I like that. Boy, I like my wife. I can talk to her. You know. Any sudden (Indiscernible). You know.

And if we have a difference, we can look and see. See, see. Oh, okay. Sometimes she'll say, "Well, I still want this." Well, that's okay. You know. But at least you can talk about it. Don't

tell me I know. You know. They're just, hey. Good. You know. Well, what do you think Lida? [laughs]

FEMALE: Want to take a little break?

Moody: No. Why?

Baker: Sure.

FEMALE: Cause Lida looks like she needs a break.

Moody: I mean it's almost time. What? We got about what? Five more minutes?

FEMALE: Yeah.

Moody: Good. Well, I've been talking about the music situation in more ways than one. But Lida what I'd like to do is I'd like to take this opportunity to say when I was first approached to do this interview is when I found out that you, Lida Baker was going to interview me. I was thrilled, mainly because not only are you a musician and are you the wife and a dear friend of a dear friend of mine, David Baker. I mean, you're very knowledgeable, and you're aware of the different trials and tribulations of musicians.

And because of that, like your questions were very potent, and they were very timely, and they were also – And I have to say this. I mean, although they wouldn't be less, very intelligence. Because I've been interviewed many times, and I have to say there's been a lot lacking when people interview. Because they say, "Well, how many times did your grandfather cut his toenails?" [laughter] You know. One of those things.

But you really, you know, you know all of the other musicians, and you know different things about them. You know different things about the music. And I know that you're constantly working and practicing. And you're always talking about what you want to get from me. I got some stuff from you musically as well as your husband. [laughter] And I just want you to know that I appreciate your coming here to our little home, me and Linda, and spending a little time with us. And what we would really like to do is get you and your husband, David, to come out and spend a little time with us and break bread together and practice. You know.

So I would really like to say thank you very much for being so kind and gracious with your interview and so in depth with the musical perception that you laid upon us. As they say in Germany, merci bo koo. [laughter] Or is that Italy? [laughter]

Baker: And I want to say thank you, because this has been such a privilege for me. I've loved and admired you as a player and as a person for so many years.

Moody: The feeling is mutual. The feeling is mutual. The feeling is mutual.

Baker: I get to sit and actually – And you know something that really is thrilling to me. When

you said, you know, you can ask me anything.

Moody: Yeah. Right.

Baker: And I will respond honestly in the best way I can.

Moody: Yeah.

Baker: To actually be able to be with someone as willing as you were to open up and share these various aspects of your life and your career with all the generations that will be coming to listen to these tapes. You know. It means a very great deal. And I thank you for your kind words.

Moody: Thank you very much. [makes kissing sound]

Baker: Just thrilled.

Moody: Thank you. [laughter]

Baker: My pleasure. Believe me.

(END OF AUDIO FILE)

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