

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH HERBIE HANCOCK, MUSICIAN

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MS. BETHEL: Good afternoon and welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Allison Bethel, and I am executive editor at Legal Times and a member of the National Press Club Board of Governors.

I'd like to welcome club members and their guests in the audience today, as well as those of you watching on C-SPAN. Please hold your applause during the speech so that we have time for as many questions as possible. For our broadcast audience, I'd like to explain that if you hear applause it may be from the guests and members of the general public who attend our luncheon, not necessarily from the working press.

The video archive of today's luncheon is provided by ConnectLive and is available to members only through the National Press Club website at www.press.org. Press Club members also can access free transcripts of our luncheons at our website. Nonmembers may purchase transcripts, audio and video tapes by calling 1-888-343-1940. For more information about joining the Press Club, can contact us at 202- 662-7511.

Before introducing our head table, I would like to remind our members of future speakers. On September 25th, we will have Senator Arlene (sic/Arlen), Republican, Pennsylvania; September 26th, Margaret Spellings, secretary of the U.S. Department of Education; and on September 29th, Stan Kasten, president of the Washington Nationals.

If you have any questions for our speaker, please write them on the cards provided at your table and pass them up to me. I will ask as many as time prohibits (sic).

I'd now like to introduce our head table and ask them to stand briefly when their names are called. Please hold your applause until all head table guests are introduced.

From your right, Inez Saki-Tay, freelance reporter; Valerie Jackson, associate editor at Platts, a division of McGraw-Hill; Marilou Donahue, producer and editor, Artistically Speaking, and a member of the Speakers Committee; John Hughes of Bloomberg News and chair of the National Press Club Speakers Committee. Skipping over our speaker briefly, Marc Wojno of Keane Federal Systems and member of the Speakers Committee; Daproska Savic (sp), a reporter with Virchina Navowsky (ph) in Belgrade. (Applause.) I could not get Arlen's name right, but hers. (Chuckles, laughter.)

Our guest today is a true American musical innovator. Herbie Hancock may be known by millions throughout the world as the creator of the '80s hit "Rockit," but that just one of a long list of impressive accomplishments.

As a performer, he has toured the world as an ambassador of American music, inspiring millions of fans while being inspired by their cultural diversity.

As a composer, he has created unique musical vistas, aided with a vast array of acoustic and electronic keyboards and computer programs.

As a businessman and producer, he has helped to establish several entertainment enterprises, creating new opportunities for young artists to flourish artistically throughout a broad range of genres.

As an artist, he is inspired by life, people and cultural identity.

However, it is cultural identity, particularly the perception that Americans have towards jazz music, which is of concern to him. Herbie Hancock sees jazz as America's greatest indigenous art form that has been a positive artistic force throughout the world.

But the truth is that jazz is an underappreciated art form, especially in the very country that it is identified with, the United States. Why is this so, and what needs to be done? Herbie Hancock joins us today to address this concern.

To understand how much of a positive impact jazz has played in shaping the hearts and minds of our people, we need look no further than the life of our guest speaker. Born in Chicago in 1940, Herbie was a child piano prodigy who at the age of 11 performed a Mozart piano concerto with

the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Encouraged by his parents, Herbie's interest in jazz blossomed in high school.

Two of his musical influences were pianists Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans. But at the same time he developed a unique attraction to electronic science, which led to a double major in music and electrical engineering at Grinnell College. Little did the world know that this would be the beginning stages of a new musical movement in America.

In 1960, at age 20, Herbie was discovered by jazz trumpeter Donald Byrd, who asked him to join his group. Bird introduced young Herbie to Alfred Lion of Blue Note Records. And after two years of session work, Herbie signed to the legendary label as a solo artist. His 1963 debut album "Taking Off" was an immediate success, producing "Watermelon Man," a big hit on jazz and R&B radio.

Almost immediately, he received a call that would forever change his life, and it would position him to become a musical icon. That call came from Miles Davis, who invited the then-23-year-old to join the Miles Davis Quintet.

During his five years with Davis, Herbie, along with saxophonist Wayne Shorter, bassist Ron Carter and drummer Tony Williams, redefined jazz and contemporary music with such seminal albums as "E.S.P.," "Nefertiti," "Miles in the Sky," and "Miles Smiles." This group is considered by many in music circles to be the greatest jazz group of the 1960s.

Even after Herbie left Davis' group in 1968, he continued to make appearances on several of Davis' recordings, including the groundbreaking 1969 album "In a Silent Way," which sparked the birth of fusion.

While contributing to Miles' impact on American music, Herbie Hancock's solo career blossomed on Blue Note, creating such classic albums as "Maiden Voyage" and "Speak Like a Child," an album whose cover shows Herbie kissing his wife, Gigi, who is here with us today, along with their daughter, Jessica.

MR. HANCOCK: Wave. (Applause.)

MS. BETHEL: In 1966, Herbie crossed into filmmaking, composing the score to Michelangelo Antonioni's film, "Blow-Up." Twenty years later, he brought the essence of jazz to the big screen, composing the soundtrack for the 1986 motion picture "Round Midnight," in which he earned an Academy Award for best score.

In the 1970s, Herbie became a leading driver of fusion, producing such electronic jazz-funk albums as "Fat Albert Rotunda," "Mwandishi," and the ever complex and controversial "Crossings," which incorporated many African influences, including instruments, rhythms and themes, but set in an electronic landscape.

In 1973, Herbie formed the Headhunters, and released an album with the same name, featuring the hit "Chameleon," which vaulted "Headhunters" to become the first jazz album to go platinum.

Despite the success of "Headhunters" and performing to stadium-sized crowds throughout the world, Herbie took time to revisit the world of acoustic jazz with former Miles bandmates Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter and Tony Williams. They formed the V.S.O.P. Quintet, which included legendary trumpeter Freddie Hubbard.

In the 1980s, Herbie Hancock surpassed his recognition for being a jazz musician and became a multimedia innovator, using cutting edge visual elements to enhance his musical compositions. His aptly titled 1983 album "Future Shock" struck platinum, and the single "Rockit" rocked the dance and R&B charts, winning a Grammy for best R&B instrumental. In addition, the video of the track won five MTV Awards.

Once again, Herbie Hancock had blazed a new path for younger musicians to follow. But throughout his success in R&B and dance music, he kept close to his jazz roots. The 1990s saw Herbie Hancock venture into newer, more adventurous musical endeavors, incorporating cutting-edge electronics and a broader range of musical styles in his compositions.

At the same time, Herbie's earlier compositions from the '60s and '70s received a modern update from several young bands, including Us 3, while his more funk-driven melodies from the '70s were sampled throughout the world by countless DJs.

Since then, Herbie Hancock remains ferociously busy. At the turn of the new century, he has helped form Transparent Music, a multimedia music company dedicated to the presentation of barrier-breaking music of all types, at all tiers of distribution, including recording, film and TV, concert events and the Internet.

His two most recent albums, "Future to Future" and "Possibilities," have kept him at the cutting edge of musical creativity, no longer limited within the structures of individual musical genres, while attracting younger generations to his music.

Outside of the recording studio and performing stage, Herbie Hancock is an educator. Herbie served as institute chairman of the Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz, an international organization devoted to the development of jazz performance and education worldwide.

He has taken on a number of roles on behalf of the institute, from competition judge to master class teacher to guest performer with the institute's prestigious college program. In fact, he spent this past weekend in D.C. as a judge for the Monk Institute's 20th Anniversary Young Musicians Jazz Competition. All of this from the love of America's classical music.

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome to the National Press Club Herbie Hancock. (Applause.)

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm honored to have this opportunity to speak with you about jazz and the passion that has fueled my life for more than 50 years.

In a way, jazz is my religion. As a practicing Buddhist for the past 34 years, I can say that, because the values in jazz and the values in Buddhism fit like a hand in a glove.

My adventure in music began when I was six years old, while banging on my best friend's piano. And after seven years of classical music lessons, I began to pay attention to jazz, which pulled me in like a magnet. What I liked about jazz was the experience of expressing my personality, my heart and soul, and uncovering ways of creating my own spontaneous melodies. I could put more of myself into the experience of playing music. In jazz you may be playing someone else's song, but the interpretation and the rendition is your own, moment to moment. And when I'm playing with a band, cooperation, intuition, sharing and creativity come into play, which are, as you know, all essential elements of a life well lived.

So just a bit of background about this national treasure which is often called America's classical music. Jazz is an original American musical art form originating sometime before the 20th century, which became more focused in New Orleans. Jazz emerged as the music of pain and suffering, marked by the profound cultural contributions of African Americans as they stood steadfast against oppression. It is characterized by blue notes, syncopation, swing, call and response, polyrhythms and improvisation.

Now, you may be wondering what these terms actually mean, so let me demonstrate with the help of Lionel Loueke from Benin, Africa, a former guitar student at the Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz Performance, the premier jazz academy for the world's most promising young artists.

I first mentioned blue notes. Here are some blue notes. Go ahead, Lionel. (Guitar demonstration.) Those are blue notes. (Laughter.) It doesn't get much bluer than that.

Okay, syncopation. Okay, here is a line that I wrote some years ago without syncopation. (Piano demonstration.) Now here it is with syncopation. (Piano demonstration.) That's syncopation. (Applause.)

Now, swing. Here's a song -- actually, it was written by Sonny Rollins. It's called "Sonny Moon for Two."

This is without swing.

(Music plays.)

Here's with swing.

(Music continues.)

That's with swing. (Applause.)

And then call in response, okay, same line, all right, all right?

(Music plays.)

All right. (Applause.)

And then we have polyrhythms. Okay. I'm going to take a waltz -- instead of a waltz -- it's a waltz, but it's got three sections, so it's three beats -- and a waltz has three beats. We're going to take three sections of three, so it's really kind of nine beats, right? So it's like this.

(Music plays.)

Okay. Now we're going to do something with polyrhythms.

(Music continues.)

That has polyrhythm. (Applause.)

So now improvisation. The same piece. By the way, that was written by Lionel Leweinke (sp). It's called "Virgin Force."

(Music plays.)

(Laughs, laughter, applause.)

The world of jazz is enormous. It's much bigger and broader than just the sounds created by the musicians on the bandstand or in the recording studio.

Since its inception, jazz has been the real voice of America and of democracy. Through the music, the collective ache of the disenfranchised has seeped out from their experiences and flowed into the public consciousness. And although jazz is uniquely American, people around the world have long proclaimed their existential right to freedom through this music, from those suffering under apartheid to those trapped behind the Iron Curtain.

The sounds of artists improvising on a theme and cooperating to make a powerful statement have never been and will never go out of style. Jazz will continue to thrive because conditions necessitate and warrant the kind of expression only jazz offers. Jazz brings people together. For that reason, it has always served an important ambassadorial function. A few years ago, President Clinton took me aside after we played at the Summit of the Americas in Chile, and he told me that our performance did more for international relations than our ambassadors could have. Jazz speaks more clearly than words.

The music is so colorful, so achingly gorgeous, so filled with passion, it takes the listener to peaks and valleys of emotion, and also uncovers possibilities. I defy anyone to hear Benny Goodman's Big Band perform, "Sing, Sing, Sing" and not get up out of their seats and head for

the dance floor. Or try listening to Nina Simone sing, "Don't Explain" without shedding a silent tear. It's just not possible.

Jazz is the ultimate interpretation of emotion in the history of Western music.

Let me show you what I mean.

Jazz can be light as a feather and sensitive.

(Piano demonstration.)

Jazz can be complicated, angular and angry.

(Piano demonstration.) (Applause.)

I recently read about a study currently being conducted at Morristown hospital in their cardiac recovery room. A harpist plays for a few hours every day, and measurements are taken to engage the effect of music on the patients. Anecdotal evidence supports the idea that music contributes to the healing process. And it's wholeheartedly welcomed by the nurses and caregivers who look forward to the visits as much as the patients do.

There's a story about this heart patient who was coming out of open-heart surgery, and he was taken into the ICU. Well, when he woke up from the surgery, he sees and hears the harpist. (Laughter.) He thought he was in heaven!

And there are other interesting research validating that music may be just what the doctor ordered when it comes to getting rid of pain. One of the studies, conducted by the Cochran (sp) Review, found that patients exposed to music rate their pain as less intense, and even use lower doses of pain killers. That's music to my ears.

Jazz has had a pervasive influence on other musical styles and techniques worldwide, and vice versa.

As a result, even after so much has been contributed to the jazz genre, jazz styles and rhythms continue to evolve in form and persuade. Today's jazz is not your grandmother's jazz.

Now, my interest in science led me to play a part in defusing electronic sounds to jazz way back in the 1960s and '70s. I remember one day when I walked into the recording studio to make a record with Miles Davis, I walked in there, and I didn't see an acoustic piano. So I leaned over to Miles, and I said, "What do you want me to play?" So he pointed to the corner, and he said, "Play that." And I looked over and I saw this Fender Rhodes electric piano. You know what I was thinking? "He wants me to play that toy?"

So I said -- well, I didn't say that to Miles, right. I said -- (laughter) -- "Okay." So I turned it on, turned up the volume a little bit, and I played a few chords. Guess what? I really liked the sound of it, you know. Not only that, but I could turn it up so I could sound just as loud as Tony

Williams who was playing the drums. (Laughter.) And a few years later, I was one of the pioneers of jazz fusion with my band, The Headhunters. Remember my song "Rocket?" It was the first tune from the hip-hop world to become a mainstream single by featuring scratching, and we made a pretty cool music video which won, as he said, numerous awards and became a mainstay on MTV.

In 1979, I was one of the first musicians to use a computer to make music. It was an ancient Apple II Plus with a motherload of 48 K of memory. (Laughter.) I was in heaven. Right now, I'm using surround sound in my live performances, which places the elements of music within in a three-dimensional space. The listening experience produced from this technology is incredible. Today, you can have multiple synthesizers in software that can simulate the function of chips, which enhances the palette of sounds available for jazz. That used to take a room full of keyboards, but now, just a laptop, and there even more breakthroughs on the horizon. For example, artists globally will be able to create, compose and jam simultaneously on the Internet - talk about bringing people and cultures together.

Jazz has informed every musical genre from rock to punk to rap. On my ride over to the Press Club this morning, I heard "American Baby" by Dave Matthews and was struck by jazz patterns in the structure. Jazz is often a secret ingredient in popular culture. You hear jazz rifts on TV commercials, walking through your supermarket, in movies and riding in an elevator.

Here let me demonstrate.

Okay. This is called "Jump, Jive and Wail." It's by Louis Prima, and it was a centerpiece of that famous Gap commercial a few years ago. (Piano demonstration.)

And here's another tune. Some of you may know this as "Maiden Voyage," which I wrote in 1965, and over the years, it's become a standard in the jazz song book. Ironically, though, it started out as a commercial jingle for Yardley's men's cologne. (Laughter.) (Piano demonstration.) (Applause.) Thank you.

I was in my local supermarket last week and was delighted to see that Pepsi has released a new product called Jazz with the tag line "The new sound of cola."

Now, when a mainstream company puts their faith in the music -- (whispering) -- you know, that secret ingredient, jazz, that I was talking about? -- well, the secret is out. (Laughter.)

The music we play mirrors the backbone of the American spirit, from which jazz was created and then flourished.

There's a long process of learning and living involved in mastering this art form. However, the results I experience from working even casually with kids around the world are instantaneous. Studied over time and played over time, jazz makes even more lasting changes in behavior and the ability to solve problems in every facet of life.

We have examples of young kids who participate in the Thelonious Monk Institute's after-school programs who struggle with math and science and can barely grasp the difficult concepts. But after a few years of learning to play an instrument and performing with a band, they're able to transfer their musical insights in music to their math and science classes, putting them on the road to better grades and self-esteem.

Perhaps you read the article in The New York Times this summer about the Guggenheim study that illustrated the link between art appreciation and enhanced performance in critical thinking. This wasn't news to me, because in my role as chairman of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, I see the same results happen to the young musicians in our inner-city school programs. Year after year, student after student, I see self-confidence, ability and understanding of large concepts soar right through the roof. This predictably results in healthier, happier and more productive students.

When we teach our kids how to take apart a musical composition and see the details of the piece, we're teaching these kids how to read, how to visualize a scene and even to speak a foreign language, because, yes, jazz is a language unto itself, a language of cooperation, joy, pain and peace.

These kids can apply these newfound skills to almost any situation. I've seen kids exposed to jazz perk up and take notice of the world around them. It enables them to give form and function to their world, and helps them make sense of the puzzles that they face on a daily basis.

If we want to change the world -- and I do -- it is essential to educate, educate, educate our future generations. We need to perpetuate jazz and make sure that this rich cultural heritage, born out of suffering and indecency, pain that was transformed by its creators into the most gorgeous, dazzling, heart-wrenching sounds, remains a beacon for others to follow. And we need your help.

Let me say that again. We need your help. Without the press lending a hand, we'll continue to make progress, but with the media at our side, we can create miracles.

Frankly, jazz has become a second-class citizen. In the music industry, a jazz CD is considered a great success if it sells 10,000 units. Let us attempt to change this.

So I ask you today to partner with me, with the Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz, the entire jazz community and every music teacher around the world breaking their backs to spread the word to young people in their cities, towns and villages. Help us foster a more talented, confident, compassionate and educated generation of young people because they are the kids who will run our nation and the world.

Here's a story that illustrates the power of jazz, the power of life and the force of gentle compassion found in the jazz community. Many of you in the audience may have probably heard of and listened to the trailblazing music of Michael Brecker. Michael, a remarkable and extraordinary composer and performer, is one of the most respected and imitated jazz saxophonists of the post-Coltrane era. You've heard him with Johnny Mitchell, Steely Dan,

James Taylor and on "Saturday Night Live." He earned his 11 Grammy awards by being a versatile virtuoso and developing a distinct tone, jaw-dropping technique and harmonic daring.

Michael is like a brother to me. Several years ago he was diagnosed with the blood disorder MDS. And despite a widely publicized, worldwide search, he was unable to find a matching blood- cell donor. He received an experimental partial transplant, but it's unclear whether the procedure will provide a long-term remedy. However, Michael is a champ. He has received an endless supply of compassion, of love and support from every member of the worldwide jazz family, an extremely large and close-knit bunch of artists, educators, business people and fans. We carry an ethic and power that speaks for what we believe in.

We can go around demonstrating how the music soothes the pain, but we don't have to look any further than our own backyard to see the results. I was tremendously honored to have the privilege of playing with Michael at Carnegie Hall for the first time when he was able to return to performing this past June. Afterwards when I asked him how he felt, he answered, "Not so good. But when I play, I feel on top of the world."

And so in closing, I'll let my piano talk for me. Listen to the sounds I make. Feel the message and spread it around the world. Thank you. (Applause.)

(Plays piano.)

(Applause.)

MS. BETHEL: We will take a few moments to have our guest answer a few of your questions. We're a little short on time, but I'll get through as many of them as I can.

I'll begin with the young people in the audience who want to know, if a talented young player likes playing classical as well as jazz, where will he get a better music education, a jazz study program or a classical conservatory?

And along those lines, how difficult is it for a really talented artist to be recorded, produced and distributed? (Laughter.)

MR. HANCOCK: At first it sounded like two questions! (Laughs.) Actually, even those two are very, very different.

I started off as a classical player and then I moved into jazz. But at that time, there were no schools -- I think there was one school that actually taught jazz. So I really had to learn jazz from the streets, you know, from listening to records and hanging out with musicians and asking a lot of questions. But because I had a very analytical kind of mind, it kind of fit in with the attitude that I had to kind of search for answers myself.

But today, many of the jazz schools are cognizant of the fact that many of our young people really come from a classical background, and so nurturing their talent is not really about negating

their classical training, but enhancing it. You know, in other words, broadening their talent and broadening their horizons.

You know, at the Monk Institute we have several programs for young people. There's one in California that we have called Bebop to Hip Hop. And so it doesn't matter whether you're coming from classical music or whether you're coming from hip hop, you know, our programs are designed to wake up the creative talent of young people. So, the Thelonius Monk Institute is one place to go. For older students, we have a college program too.

But I don't want to just kind of beat our own bandwagon. There's the Berkeley College of Music in Boston, and there are several other schools throughout the United States. And also, on college campuses there are jazz departments which are often, you know, of course, connected with the music schools there, and you can follow both pursuits as far as you want to take them.

Okay, the next question about -- let's see, it was -- let me see, it was distribution and recording. Okay. You know, I get asked this question a lot about how difficult it is for a very talented artist to be recorded, produced and distributed. There's the bad news and there's the good news, you know. The bad news is that the music industry, the recording industry, is today not what it was yesterday. This is the 21st century, and there are still those in the established music industry that still have 20th century thinking, you know.

But, as I said, it's a brand new day. So the good news is that there are new kinds of opportunities that are being opened up every day by people who are creative enough to formulate new ideas as far as distribution is concerned.

I was fortunate in that my last record possibilities I was able to first go to Starbucks for distribution.

And that's a coffee company, man. But I didn't have to go -- I didn't have to beg the record companies, you know, and go to them and have the standard channels, which are Tower Records and Virgin Record Stores. You know, I had something else in my pocket. I had Starbucks as a whole new ball game. I mean, they appeal to people of all ages, you know? Plus, I mean, what a great atmosphere to walk into a coffee shop. You can't resist buying a record when you're in there, you know? (Laughs, laughter.) You know, maybe Tower Records should get the idea and have coffee in Tower Records. You'd think that'd work, or, you know -- but also, there's the Internet. There's so many young musicians that have websites. I mean, there's people everywhere. There are kids that have websites, and they're able to sell their own records without the help of anyone on their websites. And guess what? It doesn't cost a lot of money to make a really professional sounding record, you know, because of the technology, because of the pricing these days.

And so -- not only that, but also, record labels -- because they're having a rough time these days, they're willing to be a lot more creative about the kinds of relationships that they have with artists in a way that they never dreamed possible before. So there's a lot to look forward to, but keep your mind open and keep figuring out for yourselves, you know, how can I create an avenue for me which will be able to bring my music to the public that I hope wants to hear it?

MS. BETHEL: You touched on this a little bit, but what is your assessment of the effect of Katrina on the world of jazz, and specifically the musical world of New Orleans?

MR. HANCOCK: It's unfortunate when tragedy brings something that's extremely positive to the awareness of the public. But I'm a firm believer that hidden within any event that happens to us or to our friends, there is something to gain from it. So the good news is that it really brought out the spirit of fans who really care about jazz, and it kind of was a slap in the face to a lot of people who have ignored jazz, and it made them stand up and pay attention. You know, that was the important gift that we have that emerges from that horrible tragedy.

The fact that jazz has been given so much attention from the media -- you know, but because of that tragedy, I really appreciate that as a jazz practitioner myself. But it's important to realize that New Orleans carries with it the cultural foundation of America, and a lot of people are a lot more aware of that now, and I think we've ignored that much too long. And I think what will -- sort of the like phoenix rising out of the ashes -- New Orleans will come alive again. There'll be a new phoenix, you know, but the music is not going to die because you're not going to let it die, are you? No.

MS. BETHEL: A number of people have asked about light jazz. Menace to society, or can you find it tolerable?

MR. HANCOCK: (Chuckles.) Yeah, I think you're talking smooth jazz, right? Light jazz, smooth jazz, yeah. Look, jazz in any form is fine with me. (Chuckles.) The fact that jazz -- I mean, it's part of jazz's character to influence various styles of music and to borrow from various styles of music. When I was first involved with the beginnings of jazz fusion, I asked myself exactly those same questions. But when I thought about the real spirit of jazz -- I mean, jazz represents democracy and freedom and openness, you know? So jazz can present itself in many forms, just like the different kinds of clothing that we all wear.

You know, yes, we all have all different faces, you know, but our bodies have the same basic components. But look around the room. Everybody's wearing something completely different, you know. Jazz is like that. And you can choose every day which colors you want to wear, which -- whether you want to wear a suit or you want to wear jeans or you want to wear a tuxedo. Jazz is like that, too. So it has many, many different forms, just like life.

MS. BETHEL: One final question. One of our guests asks what you keep in your CD player.

MR. HANCOCK: That's funny. I thought she was going to say: What do I keep in my iPod? (Laughter.)

But I guess she looked at me, and maybe she figured I was too old for an iPod. (Laughter.) No. Nobody's too old for an iPod. (Chuckles.)

I bet, you know, most of this room probably has iPods, right, you know, or some form of it. But iPod is the generic word now.

But the interesting thing is that, as you said before, I'm pretty busy, and I have assignments that I'm always working on. So usually what is in my iPod or on my CD player is something that's necessary for the work that I'm doing, you know. It's very difficult for me to find the time to listen to music for just pure enjoyment, because I'm always involved in one thing or another.

But I can't resist listening to Wayne Shorter and his various groups that he's had over the years, or I can't resist listening to Miles Davis. Those are probably the top two people on my list. There's also Gil Evans, who did a lot of things with Miles Davis -- "Sketches of Spain" and "Porgy and Bess" and "Miles Ahead." Those are the people I listen to.

But you know, once in a while I'll, you know, put in something -- you know, Sly Stone, or James Brown, or Earth, Wind and Fire, you know, Dave Matthews, and Joni Mitchell, a lot of different things.

MS. BETHEL: I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your words and for your talent and for sharing both with us today, and present you with this, on behalf of the National Press Club --

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you.

MS. BETHEL: -- and with the much sought-after Press Club mug. (Laughter.)

MR. HANCOCK: Oh, great! (Applause.) Thank you.

MS. BETHEL: And with that, I'd like to thank you all for coming today. I'd also like to thank National Press Club staff members Melinda Cooke, Pat Nelson, Jo Anne Booze and Howard Rothman for organizing today's lunch. Also, thanks to the National Press Club library for their research. Research is available to all National Press Club members. For more information -- not a commercial -- please call 202-662-7523.

Thank you, and enjoy your afternoon. (Applause.)

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