



“That old adage, ‘Physician heal thyself.’ This is what heals me. Playing music. It's what makes me well. How can I help somebody else if I'm not well?”

-Eddie Henderson

Biography

It must be something in the genes. Born in New York City on October 26, 1940, Eddie Henderson speaks with enormous pride of his childhood. "I have a pretty imposing show business heritage. My mother was one of the dancers in the original Cotton Club. She had a twin sister, and they were called The Brown Twins, and they used to dance with Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers. That film of Fats Waller doing 'Ain't Misbehavin' where the lady sits on the piano and he sings to her? That's my mother. And my father sang with Bill Williams and the Charioteers, who were like the number one black singing group in the nation-over and above the Ink Spots and the Mills Brothers."

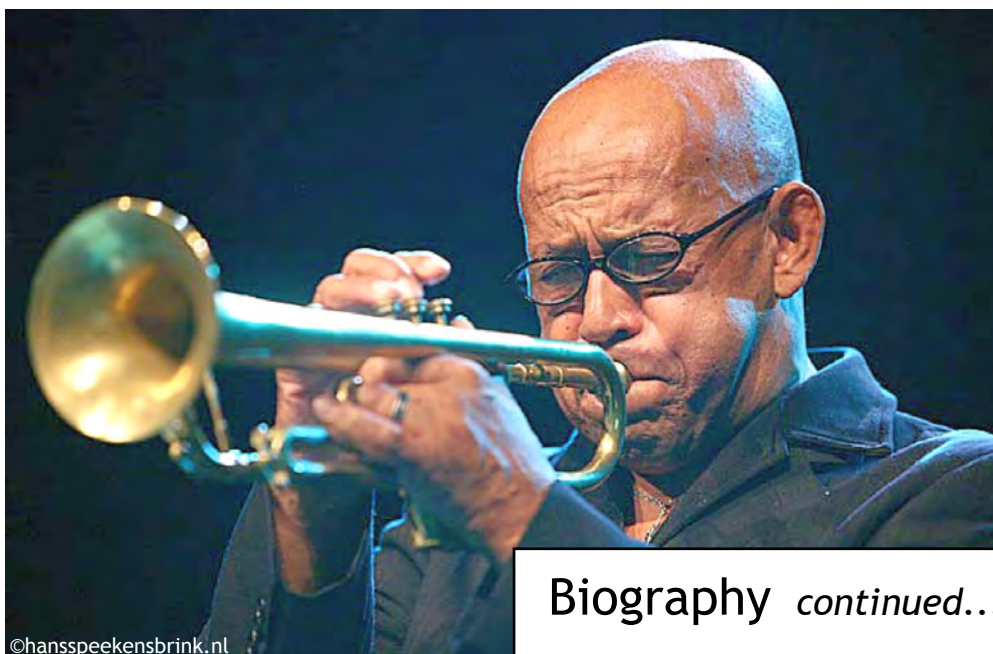
Such was Jazz trumpeter extraordinaire Henderson's life. He was blessed with knowing many famous musicians growing up. His stepfather was a doctor to people like Miles and Coltrane and Duke Ellington. In fact, his first informal lesson on the instrument at the age of 9 was from Louis Armstrong.

The family moved to San Francisco in 1954, and there, from 1954 to 1957, Eddie studied trumpet, flugelhorn, and music theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and performed with the San Francisco Conservatory Symphony Orchestra. Proper technique is always the cornerstone of such an undertaking. And so it was with a bit of brashness, and a dash of innocent ignorance, that he spoke to a friend of his parents sometime in 1957 as the two drove down a city street.

Young Eddie didn't know the man well, but had just accompanied him to a gig in San Francisco. "You don't play correct," the teenager told the driver, who promptly screeched the car to a halt.

"What the f**k are you playing?" intoned the man in a gravely voice. "I play trumpet," the boy responded. "Yeah. I'll BET you play trumpet," said Miles Dewey Davis III as he threw the car back in gear and drove on.

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“Miles is so very special to me because when I was in high school he stayed in my parents’ house when he came through town about 1957, '58 and '59 in San Francisco.”

Biography *continued...*

“Actually, I really didn't know who he was,” says Henderson in early June, recalling the incident. The first band he heard Davis perform with included John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, Paul Chambers, Wynton Kelly and Philly Joe Jones. Not unlike watching the Yankees with Mantle, Maris, Berra and Whitey Ford prior to paying attention to the sports pages.

As a family friend, Davis became more familiar to Henderson. In fact, Miles has been a major musical influence throughout Eddie's life.

“Miles is so very special to me because when I was in high school he stayed in my parents' house when he came through town about 1957, '58 and '59 in San Francisco. I was going to the conservatory then studying classical music.

Miles returned to the Bay area about nine months after that day in the car, Henderson recounted. “In the interim, I found out who he was and bought records. So he walked in my house. My mother was taking pictures. I got my trumpet and said, 'Man, you gotta hear this.' I played with the record. So I ran up to him and said, 'How do you like that?' and he said, [affecting Miles trademark voice] 'You sound good. But that's me.' That was my first revelation.

“These are important things for the predecessors to relay to the people coming up. You should emulate, not imitate,” explained Henderson, noting that he also received other tips from Miles.

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Biography *continued...*

“My stepfather said, 'Show him something.' So he wrote on a napkin, four notes implying a C7 chord. I'm looking at him, and he said, 'Man, don't look at me. Look at the music!' That's about as far as it went as far as formal sitting down stuff, but by going and hearing him play, I learned so much without words.”

After Miles Davis, Henderson's influences expanded. “I think the first one that struck me was Freddie Hubbard, when I was in medical school in Washington, D.C., and then Lee Morgan. Every weekend for four years I would drive up to New York, be at Freddie Hubbard's house every Saturday morning, practicing with him. He'd show me things and we'd hang out. I'd go to his gigs. And every Sunday morning, I'd be at Lee Morgan's house and he'd show me things. Then I'd go back to medical school every day, during the day, and practice trumpet every night.”

Other influences included Booker Little, Clifford Brown and Woody Shaw. “I heard others, like the great Kenny Dorham, but they didn't touch me as deeply,” he says.

After three years in the Air Force, Henderson enrolled at U.C. Berkeley, graduating with a B.S. in zoology in 1964. He then studied medicine at Howard University in Washington, DC, graduating in 1968. Though he did his residency in psychiatry, he only practiced general medicine. During this period, he performed occasionally with John Handy, Joe Henderson, Big Black, and Philly Joe Jones. Eddie moved back to the Bay area for his medical internship and residency - and the break that thrust him fully into music. It was a weeklong gig with Herbie Hancock's Mwandishi band that led to a three-year job. “That changed my life,” says Henderson.



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“Eddie is a grand master on his instrument and he's a real artist, someone who transcends the music on the page every time he plays.”

Joe Locke - Vibraphonist

Biography *continued...*

After touring with Hancock, doors were opened. Henderson joined Art Blakey and also got to play with Dexter Gordon, Roy Haynes, Jackie McLean, Joe Henderson, McCoy Tyner. “That’s how the heritage goes. You play with one of the greats, then you get acknowledged by all the other greats that your credentials must be in order. That opened the door for everything else that happened to me. It’s been wonderful.”

Henderson also didn’t struggle like some musicians coming up. Things seemed to fall into place, but that’s not to say he didn’t work extremely hard on his instrument. The fortuitous journey up the ladder is not lost on this artist.

“I really didn’t have to come up through the ranks. I was more or less picked up by my bootstraps and pulled up to a high echelon. Just by playing with people like Herbie Hancock, Buster Williams, Julian Priester, in that Mwandishi group, it’s invaluable. Rather than going to jam sessions and struggling and just sitting in a couple tunes. My development went in leaps and bounds because that particular band worked for three and a half years, about 10 months a year. So it was like a wormhole in evolution.

“They had a club in San Francisco called the Keystone Corner. When name groups came in like Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Dexter Gordon, Jackie McLean, Joe Henderson would come through town, they would always hire me. So I didn’t have to come to New York. I was playing with everybody I wanted anyway. I had my cake and ate it.”

His extensive playing career still in full swing, Eddie currently lives in the Mecca for jazz, New York City. His talented trumpet is in demand not only in the U.S., but internationally where he performs at Jazz festivals throughout the world. He makes sure to surround himself with other talented musicians. As Eddie says, “I learned one thing from Miles, how important it is to pick the right chemistry of people.”

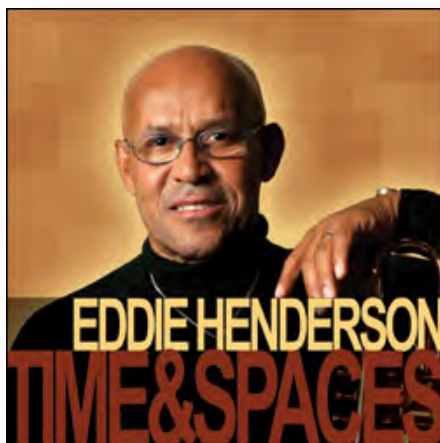


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Discography

Releases:

Realization (LP)
Inside Out (LP)
Sunburst (LP)
Heritage (LP)
Comin' Through (LP)
Cyclops (12")
Mahal (LP)
Prance On / Say You Will (12")
Runnin' To Your Love (LP)
Anthology (CD)
Anthology Vol.2 (The Capricorn Years) (CD)
So What (CD)
Sunburst (CD)
Phantoms (CD)
Echoes: Live At The Sunside
Flight Of Mind
Think On Me
Trumpet Legacy
Precious Moment
Manhattan in Blue
Time and Spaces
Inspiration
Dark Shadows
Reemergence
Oasis
Encontro Em Lisboa
Dreams of Gershwin
Running to Your Love
Mahal
Heritage



Also appears on:

Crossings (LP)
Dance Of Magic (LP)
Love From The Sun (LP)
The Dynamite Brothers (LP)
Leaving This Planet (2xLP)
Invitations (LP)
Journey To The One (2xLP)
New World (LP)
Live At Fat Tuesdays (LP)
A Dream Fulfilled (CD)
Journey To The One (CD)
Dance Of Magic / Dark Of Light (CD)
Modern Day Jazz Stories (CD)
Gershwin's World (CD)
Mirrors (CD)
Playtime - 10 Pure 70's Jazz-Funk Tracks
Music Is My Sanctuary (CD)
The Dance Decade 1973-1983 (Capitol Classics Volume 1 (LP)
Prance On
Capitol Classics (The Best Of Volumes 1&2)
Classic Jazz-Funk Mastercuts Volume 1 (CD)
Blue Break Beats (CD)
Blue Break Beats Vol. 2
Inside You
Street Sounds Presents Anthems Volume 1
Jazz Satellites Volume 1: Electrification
Blue Break Beats Vol. 4 (2xLP)
Electric Blue (CD)
Capitol Rare Vol.3 (CD)
Chips & Cheers (CD)
Playtime - 10 Pure 70's Jazz-Funk Tracks
The Jigga Collection 2 (2xLP)
Pops In Jazz (2xCD)
Blue Note Revisited (CD)
Blue Note Trip - Goin' Down (2xLP)
Blue Note's Sidetracks Vol. 5
Something For The Weekend Volume 2
Yama [Japan]
Sky Dance
V.S.O.P. Herbie Hancock
Dark Of Light Norman Connors
Sextant Herbie Hancock
Mwandishi Herbie Hancock
Coast
Language of the Emotions
Trumpet Legacy
Joe Henderson: Inner Urge

Critical Acclaim For Eddie Henderson



“Influenced by Miles Davis, Eddie Henderson has become one of the foremost jazz trumpeters in recent years.”

- Tower.com

“Eddie Henderson, refined, elegant, polished, poised are the adjectives that come to mind...Henderson's burnished, ringing tone effortlessly addressing all the tunes' subtleties. Henderson has seldom sounded better.”

- The Vortex

“Henderson, a fearless improviser whose sound can be either ethereal and enigmatic or exuberant and extroverted, dominates the proceedings without overshadowing the other members of the quintet's considerable contributions.”

- Russ Musto, All About Jazz.com

“There are a lot of good reasons to buy this CD. One is trumpeter Eddie Henderson, who just gets better with age.”

- Stuart Kremsky, Cadence Magazine

“Having devoted much of his performing life to developing his own style, Henderson has done so to the extent where it is possible for him to pay tribute to his mentor in the best possible way: by playing Miles's music like Eddie Henderson.”

- Marshall Bowden, PopMatters.com