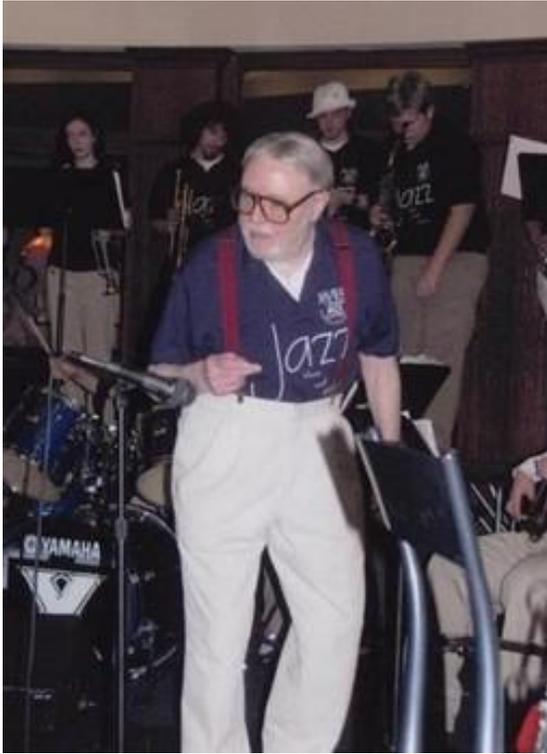


# John DeFoor

## Jazz Pioneer and Educator



With a professional career spanning greater than five decades, John DeFoor was a performer, arranger, composer, and educator of jazz music. He's performed with such dignitaries as Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Kenton, Maynard Ferguson, and countless others. As a young trumpet player, John's work with Sarah Vaughn on the recording of "Ain't No Use" caused critics to incorrectly speculate the sound of Miles Davis (how flattering for a young musician!). John has written numerous pieces, including arrangements for the Audrey Hepburn movie *Funny Face*. He has also composed and arranged productions for Las Vegas Casinos & Hotels.

John found an unparalleled reward in teaching, as a Professor of Music at Cal Poly University in Pomona, CA, and Director at the University of Cincinnati. In 1983, John pioneered the Jazz Studies Program at Xavier University as its Director. For 27 years, the Xavier University Jazz Ensemble has maintained a strong, visible presence with John at the helm. Over the years, he has empowered his students with many extraordinary opportunities, from writing their own arrangements to studio recordings and more. In 1993, John attained nationwide attention as a director, leading a band of musicians from various universities for Bill Clinton's Presidential Inauguration.

In the jazz world, musicians not only perform, they also teach – preserving the art form by enlightening the youth on its history and beauty. John DeFoor had a vision that fathomed the allure of glory and prestige. With John, it was never about record deals or center spotlights. His life's work was a mission of artistic expression of the music he's held near and dear all his life. Furthermore, a mission of introducing this art to the youth; all the while guiding and teaching them the true meaning and virtues of a real musician. Aubrey Johnson, Founder of The Jazz Half and former vocalist under John's direction, recalls an interview he had with him in 2008. "From rehearsal to performance, John always emphasized the importance of students having a professional attitude, along with the ability to balance hard work and fun". John's mission is boldly pronounced through every note, every arrangement, every recording, and every student he's encountered. Throughout his career, John has been an active member of the American Society of Composers, Arrangers, and Publishers (A.S.C.A.P.), and the National Association of Jazz Educators.

John has successfully accomplished the difficult task of staying true and real to his music (which, quite frankly, is more difficult with jazz). Sue Brown-DeFoor, John's wife and ensemble manager said, "Whenever John set his mind to do something, he always did it his way. There was never another option". Everyone knew this about John, and would expect nothing else from him.

John DeFoor taught his students much more than music, he taught them how to harness their own creativity, and follow through their artistic expression with uncompromised integrity. He taught students the hallmarks of a contributing citizen to society, from professionalism, to promptness. John selflessly gave his time and knowledge to every student that crossed his path, from individual lessons to group rehearsals; he possessed the embodiment of a Music Director, and always maintained the core relationship between teacher and student.