



Post War The Hottest
Jazz That Was Cool
Came From California

A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY FILM

WEST COAST COOL JAZZ

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FILM OVERVIEW

WEST COAST COOL JAZZ

A Feature Documentary by Wire Notebook Films
In Association with Frank Zamacona & Zamacona Productions

Film Overview

West Coast Cool Jazz explores the musicians, artists, producers, photographers, club owners, and cultural innovators who shaped a defining era of American jazz between 1949–1969. With aging archives, shifting ownership, and dwindling first-generation voices, this history faces a real risk of disappearing without dedicated preservation.

From Miles Davis and Gil Evans' groundbreaking 1949 Birth of the Cool collaboration to the vibrant Black music scene on Los Angeles's Central Avenue — and from the bebop fire of Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk to the spacious, modern California sound of Gerry Mulligan, Chet Baker, Chico Hamilton, Art Pepper, Hampton Hawes, and Dave Brubeck — the film traces how these creative worlds influenced one another and reshaped the direction of American music.

This is not only a jazz story — it is a portrait of a cultural moment when music, design, photography, fashion, and a new West Coast “cool” sensibility converged into a Californian identity admired around the world. Despite segregation and unequal access to venues and recording opportunities, collaboration and innovation still emerged across communities, shaping an era of creativity that continues to influence American culture.

Current Stage of the Project

We have completed an early-phase, public-facing trailer developed specifically for donor outreach. Because the project relies heavily on licensed music and archival materials, as well as interviews, this version does not yet include full period recordings or comprehensive archival footage. Instead, it introduces the tone, vision, and direction of the film while we raise funds to produce the fully licensed fundraising trailer required for major grants, broadcasters, and cultural partners.

This \$100,000 development phase enables the production of a rights-approved fundraising trailer — a critical tool for securing major grants, institutional partnerships, broadcast and streaming interest, and private donor support.

SUPPORT THE FILM

Support the Film

Your contribution helps unlock the next critical stage of West Coast Cool Jazz.

This \$100,000 development phase directly funds music licensing, archival clearances, interviews, and production work required to produce the fully licensed fundraising trailer that opens the door to major grants, institutional partners, and broadcast opportunities.

Please consider donating today to help preserve this vital chapter of American jazz history and move the film into full production. Every contribution makes a meaningful difference.

Why We Are Raising \$100,000

This campaign supports the development phase, not the full feature film.

For music- and archive-driven documentaries, the next major step is creating a comprehensive, fully licensed fundraising trailer aligned with the expectations of cultural institutions, funders, and public-media platforms.

Your contribution supports:

- Licensing archival film, video, photographs, and materials for the fundraising trailer
- Preliminary music research and clearance assessment
- Collaboration with music-rights specialist Brooke Wentz (The Rights Workshop)
- Archival research support from Blanche Chase
- Interviews and early on-location filming
- Editorial, production, and research work required for major grant applications
- Development infrastructure for full financing

This \$100,000 phase is the foundation that unlocks full production financing — it is not the budget for the feature film itself.

THE FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

The Feature Documentary

Following development, the full-length documentary will include:

- Interviews with musicians, scholars, producers, club owners, families, and artists connected to the era
- Licensed archival film, photography, ephemera, and recordings
- Immersive sound design reflecting bebop and West Coast cool traditions
- In-depth historical and cultural analysis exploring music, race, design, and mid-century American identity
- Cinematic storytelling that brings this under-documented chapter to life

Impact and Educational Value

The film will:

- Preserve a vital, at-risk chapter of American jazz history
- Highlight the contributions of Black musicians whose influence is often under-documented in West Coast narratives
- Illuminate the movement of ideas between East and West Coast musical communities
- Provide educators and institutions with a deeply researched cultural resource
- Connect younger audiences to the sounds that shaped film, television, and modern jazz
- Celebrate resilience, collaboration, and creative expression during a transformative era

Educational materials will include classroom modules, educator guides, and community-based programming tools.

DISTRIBUTION & OUTREACH STRATEGY

Phase 1 — Festival Circuit

Telluride, Sundance, SXSW, SFFILM, DOC NYC, Monterey Jazz Festival Film Series, and select international festivals.

Phase 2 — Cultural & Institutional Partnerships

SFJAZZ, LA Jazz Institute, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Monterey Jazz Festival, National Jazz Museum in Harlem, universities, conservatories, libraries, and cultural institutions.

Phase 3 — Broadcast & Streaming

PBS member stations, public-media partners, and select streaming platforms.

Phase 4 — Community Engagement

Community screenings, jazz-club salons, library programs, and cultural dialogues.

Creative Team

Sandra Evans — Creative Producer / Producer, Wire Notebook Films

Sandra Evans is a creative director and producer with extensive experience shaping visual narratives across nonprofit, commercial, and arts-driven environments. Her background spans corporate and documentary video, brand development, and creative direction. West Coast Cool Jazz draws from her deep connection to California's cultural fabric and her commitment to research-driven storytelling.

Frank Zamacona — Executive Producer / Director, Zamacona Productions

Frank Zamacona is an award-winning director and producer whose work spans PBS, ABC, Discovery Channel, HGTV, and theatrical documentary projects. His career includes multiple Emmys, a Clio, CINE Golden Eagle, and national broadcast honors. He brings decades of cinematic and editorial leadership to the project.

DISTRIBUTION & OUTREACH STRATEGY

Specialized Development Partners

- Steve Condiotti — Cinematography Consultant / Director of Photography
- Eli Adler — Cinematography Consultant / Director of Photography
- T.M. Christopher — Editor / Editorial Consultant
- Blanche Chase — Archivist & Archival Research Consultant
- Brooke Wentz / The Rights Workshop — Music Rights & Clearances

These partnerships ensure a strong and well-supported transition from development to full production.

Fiscal Sponsorship

West Coast Cool Jazz is fiscally sponsored by Filmmakers Collaborative under Wire Notebook Films. All donations are received, managed, and disbursed by Filmmakers Collaborative for the development of this project.

ARTISTIC STATEMENT

Artistic Statement

Sandra Evans, Producer & Creator – West Coast Cool Jazz

I was born in Altadena near Los Angeles and grew up in the coastal community of Corona del Mar. Those early years immersed me in a world where music, place, and personal identity intertwined — shaping not only my love of jazz, but my understanding of California's creative spirit.

I grew up hearing Count Basie and Sarah Vaughan at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Mose Allison at the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach, Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Freddie Hubbard at the Hollywood Bowl, and Laurindo Almeida and Bud Shank performing at the Laguna Bowl. I also remember seeing Dave Brubeck and other great artists at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Fair — experiences that anchored jazz not only in sound, but across geography, culture, and memory.

As a teenager struggling to find where I fit in, jazz suited both my temperament and my moment in life. It was expressive, complex, unpredictable, and alive. I still remember driving my banana-yellow VW Squareback along the coast, listening to Kenny Burrell and Wes Montgomery on the radio — ocean air drifting through the open windows. The music became part of how I understood identity, creativity, and California itself.

One afternoon, visiting a friend at her home in Corona del Mar, we walked in to find the local mailman sitting cross-legged on the floor, playing Vince Guaraldi's "Ginza Samba," the piece made famous by Brazilian guitarist Bola Sete. Her parents sat nearby, completely absorbed. In that sunlit room, we realized we were living inside a rare cultural moment — where everyday life and art blurred effortlessly. My friend had cool parents. And we had a cool mailman.

ARTISTIC STATEMENT

It is my deepest hope that this film will shine a light on the musicians — both the celebrated and the quietly influential — whose contributions defined this era. I want audiences to feel the joy, spontaneity, and creative spirit embedded in the playing of this music. And if we create a few more rabid jazz fans in the process, or inspire others to pursue a life in the arts, well, that's not a bad thing at all.

Support the Film

Your support plays a direct role in preserving and illuminating a defining chapter of American cultural history.

Every contribution to this \$100,000 development phase funds the urgent archival licensing, music clearances, interviews, and early production work required to create the fully licensed fundraising trailer — the essential bridge to full production financing.

As we move into Giving Tuesday, early support carries exceptional impact. Donations made now help establish momentum, demonstrate confidence in the project, and enable us to secure key materials and partnerships at this critical stage.

Please consider contributing today and standing with us as we bring the legacy, sound, and creative spirit of this era to life.



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