Guaraldi, Vince (1928-1976) Encyclopedia Article

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Guaraldi, Vince (1928-1976)

Vince Guaraldi was one of the finest jazz pianists of the 1950s and 1960s. Eventually the leader of his own group, his resume also included time with jazz greats Cal Tjader and Duke Ellington. In 1963 he won a Grammy for his song "Cast Your Fate to the Wind," and although Guaraldi recorded many successful albums and had a thriving concert career, he will forever be known as the composer for the Charlie Brown television specials. His music for *A Boy Named Charlie Brown* and *A Charlie Brown Christmas* became irrevocably linked to the Peanuts franchise, and several of his songs, including "Linus and Lucy," "Red Baron," and "Great Pumpkin Waltz," became standard music for all Peanuts specials. Guaraldi's music introduced children to jazz, and his upbeat, bouncy style seemed a perfect fit to the characters created by Charles Schultz. Although Guaraldi died unexpectedly in 1976, performers from Wynton Marsalis to David Benoit continue to play his compositions and his albums continue to sell.

Further Reading:

Gioia, T. *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz In California, 1945-1960.* New York, Oxford University Press, 1992.

Hamlin, J. "Guaraldi's 'Peanuts' Legacy Lives On: Late Pianist's Music Still Makes Money." *San Francisco Chronicle.* February 11, 1997, E1.

Sullivan, J. "Peanuts' Composer's Legacy." *San Francisco Chronicle.* October 18, 1998, 44.