

"For Phil"

In 2000 I decided to write a song for Phil Woods. I've always loved his playing and it saddened me that he had to leave the country to make a living in music. I have most of Phil's recordings and I studied with him in the 70's after his return from Paris. So I knew Phil's ups and downs well and wrote lyrics about his struggles and successes... and his life. When I finished writing For Phil I called and told him about my composition. He asked if I would send him a lead sheet...and I did. We started emailing back and forth and I get a message from Phil that says "I took it to the piano and I really dig it." Then he added "Keep scratching bro." In 2005 I recorded For Phil with Angela and my sextet and sent Phil an album. A few weeks later we had a get-together in Manhattan and he did a photo-shoot with Angela and me. Our friendship continued over the years and whenever possible Angela and I would go to his performances. Sadly Phil's health started deteriorating and it was clear that his breathing had become an issue. On September 29, 2015 Phil passed. On November 15, 2019, during the pandemic, I decided to dress up For Phil and surround these lyrics and melody with a full big band orchestration. On October 26, 2022 For Phil was recorded again by Angela...with a new suit and a blistering alto solo by Todd Bashore. But I think it's important for the listener to know that this song was written from the heart from one of millions who loved Phil Woods, and he got to hear it while he was still with us. — Ron Aprea

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LEGENDS

