



Ronald Mancuso

January 5, 1933 - December 9, 2021

Jazz Musician, Multi-Instrumentalist Gus Mancuso, died early morning Thursday, December 9, 2021, at his son Ron Mancuso's home, surrounded by his family. Gus died from Alzheimer's disease he was 88 years old.

Mancuso was born January 5, 1933, in Hastings, Pennsylvania, and grew up in Rochester, New York among music contemporaries Chuck Mangione, Joe Romano and Steve Gadd. He came to Las Vegas in 1955, after serving in the Army, as a member of the Tony Pastor Big Band. Seeing that Las Vegas musicians could stay one town, make a good living and own a home, he made Las Vegas his permanent residence when he started playing with the Mary Kaye Trio, the true innovators of the legendary Las Vegas lounge acts beginning in the 1950s.

In the late 1950s, Gus signed with Fantasy Records and made his debut album "Introducing Gus Mancuso" which won the Playboy Jazz Poll for "New Artist of the Year" and was featured on the cover of Harper's Bazaar magazine. He made a second album for Fantasy entitled "New Faces" in which he displayed his immense talent by playing all of the instruments. During this time Mancuso was also featured in Leonard Feather's famous "Encyclopedia of Jazz" as the first person to bring the Baritone Horn to prominence. Beginning in the mid 1960's, Mancuso toured throughout Europe and Asia, playing Bass with legendary jazz vocalist Sarah Vaughan and then

with vocalist Billie Eckstine. With his residency in Las Vegas, Gus went on to play in various hotel show bands backing Bobby Darren, Wayne Newton, Debbie Reynolds, The Supremes, Roy Clark and many others.

In the late 1970's Mancuso relocated to Los Angeles for a bit and worked with Quincy Jones for his famous series of concerts at the Greek Theater which also featured The Brothers Johnson. Gus then toured with the famous Les Brown Band of Renown before returning to Vegas.

In the 1980s Mancuso taught at UNLV and mentored many of the musicians who now play in shows on the strip. Mancuso continued to play thru June 2021 at his weekly "Schmooze and Booze" Friday afternoon show at the Bootlegger Italian Bistro.

Mancuso is survived by his wife Maggie Peterson Mancuso, who was the actress who played the character Charlene Darling on the "Andy Griffith Show", his son music producer/recording studio owner and Bootlegger Italian Bistro COO Ronnie Mancuso, his grandson Roman Mancuso and granddaughter Zia Mancuso.

Mancuso's life will be celebrated on February 3, 2022, with a burial service at the VA cemetery in Boulder City at 2 PM followed by a Celebration of Life at the Bootlegger Bistro's Copa room at 5 PM, which will featuring many local performers. All donations will benefit Keep Memory Alive, Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, Cleveland Clinic NV.

Approved by Ronnie Mancuso @

Photo courtesy of Mancuso family archives.