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Letter from Will Friedwald to Louise Tobin, 1993-12-07

Will Friedwald

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Will Friedwald
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December 7, 1993

Mrs. Louise Tobin Hucko

Dear Mrs. Hucko:

I'm a freelance music writer. My book, *JAZZ SINGING: AMERICA'S GREAT VOICES* has been reviewed in *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, *ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY*, *PEOPLE* and *TIME* and has just been released both in paperback and in British and German editions. I also write frequently for *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, *THE VILLAGE VOICE* and *ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY*. Additionally, I've worked on hundreds of historical CD reissues (and have received three Grammy nominations in this capacity), including many large multi-disc sets on Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, Stan Kenton, Mahalia Jackson and others, and have appeared on the PBS special *THE FRED ASTAIRE SONGBOOK*.

In addition, I was invited by Mrs. Nancy Sinatra Lambert to write an essay for the *SINATRA: THE CAPITOL YEARS* set. More recently wrote the booklet for Capitol Records on their 16-CD *SINATRA CONCEPTS* box and also worked with Mr. Joe McEwen, with whom I have worked on a number of projects, including Reprise's double-CD compilation released in conjunction with the airing of the biography miniseries. I also wrote the 150-page booklet included in Sony Music's recently-released 12-CD set, *FRANK SINATRA: THE COMPLETE COLUMBIA SESSIONS, 1943-1952*.

I'm currently working on a book for Charles Scribner's Sons which will be a musical biography of Mr. Sinatra. I'm only covering his career as a musician and recording artist, and am not interested in his personal life. I believe this will be the first book to do this, and to help tell the story correctly I've interviewed dozens and dozens of musicians, arrangers and songwriters, including Billy May, the late Sammy Cahn, Bill Miller, Rosemary Clooney and Tony Bennett.

I have long heard that you were the first person to "discover" Frank Sinatra. According to George Simon, you heard Mr. Sinatra on a local New Jersey radio station, and recommended him to Harry James. Mr. James and you then went to the Rustic Cabin in New Jersey to hear Sinatra, and Mr. James ultimately hired him on the basis of your recommendation.

I would love to find out if this story is true or not, and anything else you may remember about the very earliest days of Mr. Sinatra's professional career.

I would be happy to do this interview over the phone, as I imagine its unlikely that we will be on the same coast anytime in the near future.

Hoping to hear from you,

Will