Pacific Jazz Records

Richard (Dick) Bock and Roy Harte initiated the Pacific Jazz label in June, 1952. Bock was a jack-of-all-trades who had worked for Discovery Records and who also did work for Down Beat magazine, and as a publicity manager for The Haig (an LA jazz club that was at that time the leading venue for west-coast jazz). Harte was a drummer who did studio work and operated a retail drum store. Reportedly, it was Harte who designed the stenciled logo for Pacific Jazz.

Bock signed upcoming artists like Gerry Mulligan to record for the new label, and by late October, Pacific Jazz had released its first single. After another in February, it was time to begin issuing long-playing albums. Photographer William Claxton normally created the cover artwork. His approach was to integrate the photography with the text in order to generate a unified and distinctive look – with each cover being a work of art. In fact, the only covers in the series that were not by Claxton were the first in the series and, more notably, John Brandt’s cover to PJLP-3 – which featured an edited Claxton photo.

The label gained in popularity, to the point where (in mid-1954) Bock expanded into the popular-music field by creating the Pacifica subsidiary. At the time Pacifica was not a hot seller, but in 1957 Pacific Jazz expanded to become World Pacific. The ten-inch line was long gone by then, as PJ had phased it out in 1955.

All in all, Pacific Jazz (and Pacifica) released 21 ten-inchers in approximately two years. Their legacy lasts to this day, and many of the LPs below are “classics.” Shown below: a Pacific Jazz 10” LP label and a shot of their address at 6124 Santa Monica Blvd.
Pacific Jazz Ten-Inch Albums

PJLP-1  Gerry Mulligan Quartet  *The Gerry Mulligan Quartet*
Recording Dates:  8/16/52; 10/15/52; 10/16/52
Release Date:  c. March, 1953
All front covers read PJLP-1. Labels of later LPs have a matte finish.
Cover:  Bob Guidi with photo from Pell-Thomas.

PJLP-2  The Gerry Mulligan Quartet  *Featuring Chet Baker/Lee Konitz Plays*
Recording Dates:  1/23/53; 1/30/53; 2/1/53; 2/24/53
Release Date:  BB May 2, 1953
The first front covers wrap around completely to the back cover; the second front covers have a white border on the wrapped-around portion. Cover:  William Claxton

PJLP-3  Chet Baker  *Chet Baker Quartet*
Recording Dates:  12/15/52; 4/17/53
Release Date:  BB July 11, 1953
Cover Design:  John Brandt; photo by William Claxton at the Haig with Mulligan Quartet in ’52.
PJLP-4  Harry Edison Quartet  “Sweets” at the Haig
Recording Dates:  7/1/53 (?)
Release Date:  CB October 10, 1953
Cover:  William Claxton

PJLP-5  Gerry Mulligan  The Gerry Mulligan Quartet
Recording Dates:  4/27/53; 4/29/53; 4/30/53
Release Date:  CB December 19, 1953
Cover:  William Claxton
The first front cover uses outline print for most of the writing; the first back cover has the titles in a red shade and lists PJLP-1 through 6 as available. The second front cover uses no outline print; the second back cover lists through PJLP-11.

PJLP-6  The Chet Baker Quartet  The Chet Baker Quartet
Recording Dates:  7/29/53; 7/30/53; 10/3/53
Release Date:  CB December 19, 1953
Cover:  William Claxton
One cover printing has a bright orange/yellow background, and another has a pink background.
PJLP-7  The Laurindo Almeida Quartet  The Laurindo Almeida Quartet
Recording Dates: 09/53
Release Date: BB March 6, 1954
Cover: William Claxton

PJLP-8  The Russ Freeman Trio  The Russ Freeman Trio
Recording Dates: 10/27/53; 12/28/53
Release Date: April, 1954 (High Fidelity, May, 1954)
Cover: William Claxton

PJLP-9  Chet Baker Ensemble  Chet Baker Ensemble
Recording Dates: 12/14/53; 12/22/53
Release Date: BB June 19, 1954
Cover: William Claxton
Lee Konitz and the Gerry Mulligan Quartet

Recording Dates: 1/23/53; 1/30/53; 4/27/53; 5/20/53
Release Date: BB May 8, 1954
Cover: William Claxton

Chet Baker Sings

Recording Dates: 10/27/53; 2/15/54
Release Date: BB May 8, 1954
Cover: William Claxton

PJLP-13  The Laurindo Almeida Quartet  The Laurindo Almeida Quartet, Volume 2
Recording Dates: 4/22/54
Release Date: BB September 18, 1954
Cover: William Claxton

PJLP-14  Bud Shank  Bud Shank and 3 Trombones
Recording Dates: 4/3/54; 6/22/54
Release Date: c. November, 1954 (High Fidelity, December, 1954)
Cover: William Claxton

PJLP-15  Chet Baker Sextet  Chet Baker Sextet
Recording Dates: 9/9/54; 9/15/54
Release Date: CB December 18, 1954
Cover: William Claxton
PJLP-16  Bob Brookmeyer Quartet  Bob Brookmeyer Quartet
Recording Dates:  7/5/54; 7/7/54
Release Date:  BB January 29, 1955
Cover:  William Claxton

PJLP-17  Chico Hamilton Trio  Chico Hamilton Trio
Recording Dates:  12/6/53; 10/2/54
Release Date:  BB June 18, 1955
Cover:  William Claxton

PJLP-18  Al Haig Trio  Al Haig Trio
Recording Dates:  3/13/54
Release Date:  Unreleased
Cover:  C. Danest
This album was released in other countries but not in the USA.
PJLP-19  Clifford Brown Ensemble  Clifford Brown Ensemble
Recording Dates:  7/12/54; 8/13/54
Release Date:  BB April 30, 1955
Cover:  William Claxton

PJLP-20  Bud Shank and Bob Brookmeyer  Bud Shank and Bob Brookmeyer
Recording Dates:  11/29/54; 1/7/55
Release Date:  BB July 23, 1955
Cover:  William Claxton

PL-801  Johnny Holiday  Johnny Holiday Sings
Recording Dates:  June, 1954
Release Date:  BB December 25, 1954
Cover:  William Claxton
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