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HEALTH FOOD INDUSTRY PIONEER LAUNCHES new book on the defining moments of jazz history, FULLY ILLUSTRATED

## From the Birth of Jazz to Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue and Beyond . . .

Richie Gerber, former owner of Bread of Life Natural Foods Markets (which merged with Whole Foods Markets in 1997), experiences the culmination of his second lifelong passion—Jazz—in his new book *Jazz America’s Gift,* published this month by Gerber’s Miracle Publishers.

The health of an individual lays the foundation for the health of a nation on every level. The U.S.—and the world at large—is experiencing a dire state of dis-ease and disordered living, resulting in a discordant clash between religions and races. With these turbulent issues at the forefront of today’s news, Gerber’s book is an important reminder of the harmony that emerges from the synergetic expression of a passion that transcends our differences.

“In Jazz, like in America, the group works together toward a common cause with lots of room left for each individual to shine,” says Gerber. This nostalgic view of the values upon which America was established is a fitting backdrop for the birth and rise of Jazz in our nation. The “gift” comes wrapped in a package of mutual respect and admiration for individual talents and the part they play in creating a melodious whole.

Gerber’s wit personalizes the narrative as he bridges the rich and varied historical beginnings of jazz with the colorful, but short, life of virtuoso composer and musician, George Gershwin. Gerber draws from his unique perspective as an accomplished musician, performer, comedian, impresario, and admirer of Gershwin’s work, as well as “all things Jazz,” to breathe new life into the reader’s appreciation of the Age of Jazz.

Complementing the narrative is the signature artwork of the storied celebrity artist Miguel Covarrubias, who can arguably be called the chronicler of the Jazz Age. With the cooperation of the Covarrubias Estate, Gerber enlivened the personal reflections and historical perspective in *Jazz America’s Gift* with Covarrubias’s creative representation of this defining era in history. The interplay of Gerber’s words and Covarrubias’s artwork makes for a visually appealing literary experience.

Gerber has produced hundreds of jazz concerts that featured his band The Free Radicals, playing straight-ahead jazz, bebop, and swing with jazz greats like Eddie Higgins, former Count Basie alumnus Pete Minger, and five-time Grammy nominee Ira Sullivan. His passion for jazz, his varied experience, and his first-hand knowledge shine through the 300-plus, large-format paperback book, giving each page a rhythm all its own.

Gerber, whose mediagenic personality is legendary in some circles, is available for interviews and media appearances. New England humorist and author Tim Sample says of Gerber, “[He’s] funny, smart, talented and charismatic . . . the ‘real deal.’ He ha[s] stellar musical chops, tons of experience, plus he[’s] from freakin’ New York City, man!”

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