



# They Call Me Stein on Vine

*Gary Chen*

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This is a true story about a born and raised Chinese boy from Taiwan through a love of jazz, came to The United States of America to study at Berklee School of Music in Boston. And, in a strange twist of fate, he landed at Stein-on-Vine (the jazz music landmark in Hollywood, California), the professional musical instrument shop that has been an essential and beloved part of the touring and local musician's world for over 60 years. Virtually every record, movie and TV show produced by Hollywood since WWII has some connection to Stein-on-Vine. Sometimes it was a mouthpiece, or a Stradivarius, or a starter instrument for a promising young talent, but even more important it has been a place where the great jazz musicians gather to laugh, drink, gossip and play. This is the unvarnished behind-the-scenes story of great musicians living their lives. "The book starts out with how I was raised and how I inherited the love for music from my grandfather and mother...some history of the relationship between Taiwan and Mainland China...how I became obsessed with western music and became a professional musician at a young age...going to The Berklee School of Music in Boston...meeting Maury Stein (my Jewish father and also brother of Jule Styne - one of the greatest American songwriters)...how we developed a closer than father-and-son kind of relationship...carrying on the tradition after Maury's passing... getting to know all the giants of jazz: Stan Getz, Ray Brown, Wayne Shorter, Al Mckibbon, Lou Levy, Horace Silver, Cedar Walton ...and became close friends with... Jazz, the only American art form that is recognized, respected and even in some places worshipped by the rest of the world, is not getting the same recognition at its birth place America. It was a beautiful world, a happy world, but a world that has shrunk dramatically in the last few years and is largely lost as fewer and fewer jazz musicians can make a decent living from their extraordinary talent. Their world transcends ethnicity, race, and class because music binds them at a level much deeper than these superficial circumstances. Jazz musicians are a different breed of people. Most of them are well read, well traveled, well informed and they are smart and quick minded. They were born to play. Their lives came to an end when they couldn't play anymore. I have the honor and privilege of getting to know them at a very personal level. This book is full of true funny stories. I like them and you will too."

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