My Favorite World #9

I've been listening to a bunch of Jim Hall recordings lately. This one, a duet with Ron Carter from 1972, exemplifies so much of what I love about the music called jazz.

It's all there…the playfulness, the attentive listening. More than anything, the sense of two people having a real conversation while never saying a word.

Jim Hall died at the end of 2013 at the age of 83. Along the way, he wrote a few of the definitive chapters on what's possible with a guitar. He played smooth, he played cool, he played hot. He could play inside with great taste and economy, as in this Cole Porter classic with the Paul Desmond Quartet. (1959)

But Hall was also an adventurer, and he was one of few the cool guitar guys to embrace the heat and risk the expanded harmonic challenges necessary to keep up with someone like Sonny Rollins. Here's some terrific footage from that era (1962).

Jim Hall was widely praised as a generous teacher, as well, and spent time with Bill Frisell, Pat Metheny, and Julian Lage, helping these guys find their own voice and navigate the dark trench of the music industry. The following link is a full set of Hall's trio with Lage at Newport, recorded just a few months before Hall died in 2013. It might be the best hour

you spend this week.

Jim Hall Trio w Julian Lage, Live at Newport Jazz (via NPR)

Nothing new in any of this…unless this is the first you've heard of Jim Hall. He kept playing well into his 83rd year, and every step of the way he was listening closely and responding with taste and honesty. His work, his legacy…a big part of My Favorite World.