

# Michael Cuscuna Tribute to Dan

[Loren Schoenberg] I would like to begin by introducing Michael Cuscuna. [applause]

Well I think, first time, Dan's work, I mean I was, in those days as a kid reading Downbeat, that was the way you learned about jazz. And it was a great informant of way. And actually, I,... my first focus on Dan's work was..., he was on the other side of an argument... than what I agreed with. There was the Don DeMichael – Dan Morgenstern "Coltrane Wars".

And I first met Dan. Actually, this is 68, so it's a typical story. I was at a party, and I met Ira Getler, as he was handing me a joint [laughter] and he said, "I heard you write for free for "Jazz and Pop". "How do you like to get paid to write for Downbeat?" So, he started giving me assignments, and I went out to Chicago, for numerous reasons.

And there I met Dan at Bob Kessler's store and he eventually gave me a feature assignment, which I think was Paul Bley. And it was remarkable, because I had taken writing courses with a lot of people, I mean Joseph Heller among them, but I wrote this feature, and I sent it to Dan, who was still in Chicago, at the time.

And it came back, you know, full of red ink. And I just dove into it, and, in spending two hours with that manuscript and his comments, and his changes, I learned more about writing than two years of creative writing in journalism, than courses could ever give me.

And It was remarkable!  
[applause]