

Herbert Jay Solomon (April 16, 1930 – July 1, 2003),^[1] known by his stage name **Herbie Mann**, was an American jazz flautist and important early practitioner of world music. Early in his career, he also played tenor saxophone and clarinet (including bass clarinet), but Mann was among the first jazz musicians to specialize on the flute. His most popular single was "Hijack", which was a *Billboard* number-one dance hit for three weeks in 1975.

Mann emphasized the groove approach in his music. Mann felt that from his repertoire, the "epitome of a groove record" was *Memphis Underground* or *Push Push*, because the "rhythm section locked all in one perception."^[2]

Biography

Herbie Mann was born in Brooklyn, New York, to Jewish parents, Harry C. Solomon (May 30, 1902 – May 31, 1980), who was of Russian descent, and Ruth Rose Solomon (née Brecher) (July 4, 1905 – November 11, 2004), who was born in Bukovina, Austria-Hungary but immigrated to the United States with her family at the age of 6.^{[3][4][5]} Both of his parents were dancers and singers, as well as dance instructors later in life.^[3] He attended Lincoln High School in Brighton Beach. His first professional performance was playing the Catskills resorts at age 15. In the 1950s Mann was primarily a bop flutist, playing in combos with artists such as Phil Woods, occasionally playing bass clarinet, tenor saxophone and solo flute.

Mann was an early pioneer of the fusion of jazz and world music.^[citation needed] In 1959, following a State Department sponsored tour of Africa, he recorded *Flutista*, an album of Afro-Cuban jazz. In 1961 Mann toured Brazil, returning to the United States to record with Brazilian musicians, including Antonio Carlos Jobim and guitarist Baden Powell. These albums helped popularize bossa nova in the US and Europe. He often worked with Brazilian themes. In the mid-1960s Mann hired a young Chick Corea to play in some of his bands. In the late 1970s and early 1980s Mann played duets at New York City's Bottom Line and Village Gate clubs, with Sarod virtuoso Vasant Rai.

Following the 1969 hit album *Memphis Underground*, a number of disco-style smooth jazz records brought criticism from jazz purists but allowed Mann to remain active during a period of declining interest in jazz. The musicians on these recordings are some of the best-known session players in soul and jazz, including singer Cissy Houston (mother of Whitney Houston), guitarists Duane Allman and Larry Coryell, bassists Donald "Duck" Dunn and Chuck Rainey and drummers Al Jackson and Bernard Purdie. In this period Mann had a number of pop hits — rare for a jazz musician. According to a 1998 interview Mann had made at least 25 albums that were on the *Billboard* 200 pop charts, success denied most of his jazz peers.^[6]

Mann provided the music for the 1978 National Film Board of Canada animated short *Afterlife*, by Ishu Patel.

In the early 1970s he founded his own label, Embryo Records, distributed by Cotillion Records, a division of Atlantic Records.^[7] Embryo produced jazz albums, such as Ron Carter's *Uptown Conversation* (1970); Miroslav Vitous' first solo album, *Infinite Search* (1969); Phil Woods and his European Rhythm Machine at the Frankfurt Jazz Festival (1971); and Dick Morrissey and Jim Mullen's *Up* (1976), which featured the Average White Band as a rhythm section; and the 730 Series, with a more rock-oriented style, including *Zero Time* (1971) by TONTO's Expanding Head Band. He later set up Kokopelli Records after difficulty with established labels. In 1996, Mann collaborated with Stereolab on the song "One Note Samba/Surfboard" for the AIDS-Benefit album *Red Hot + Rio* produced by the Red Hot Organization. Mann also played horns on the Bee Gees' album *Spirits Having Flown*.

His last appearance was on May 3, 2003, at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and he died less than two months later on July 1, 2003, at the age of 73, after a long battle with prostate cancer. He died in his home in Pecos, New Mexico, leaving his wife, Susan Janeal Arison, and four children: Paul Mann, Claudia Mann, Laura Mann-Lepik and Geoffrey Mann.