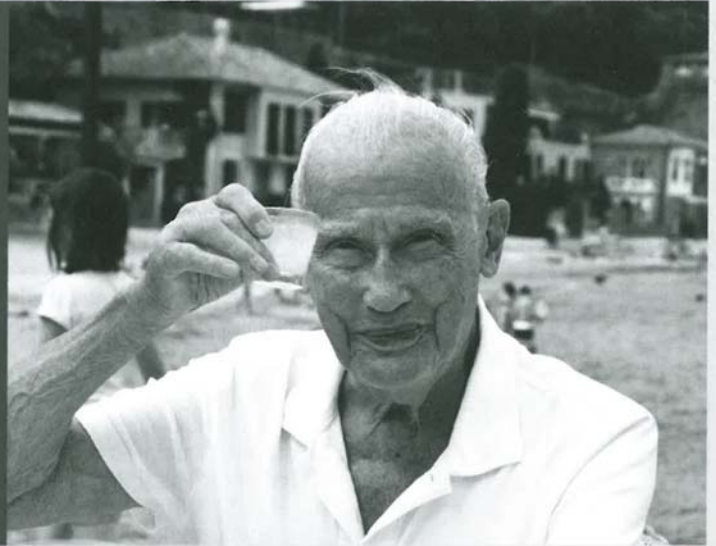


CASPER SLINGER 1923-2016

Entrepreneur with a passion for jazz



Gerlof Leistra

All of his life, Casper Slinger was crazy about music. After the Second World War, he and his older brother Willem bought imported records by American jazz artists from Gloria, a music store in Amsterdam. The brothers became friends with salesperson John Vis. In 1956 they started their own record company in Haarlem, Artone. 'Haarlem was the centre of the Dutch music industry,' says pop historian Harry Knipschild (72), who in 1965 worked for a short time in Artone's publicity department. 'As director Slinger was honest, and strict but fair.' Casper Slinger – married and father of three daughters from two marriages – died Sunday 18 September from cancer in the South of France, where he had made his home. He was 92.

Casper Slinger was born in Sloten, near Haarlem. His father was the owner of the oil company Trio. At the start of the war, Slinger was sent to a labour camp in Berlin. He jumped off the train, went into hiding at the home of a German woman, and escaped to Russia. He informed the English troops by radio.

After secondary school, Slinger studied pharmacy in Utrecht and then, just like his brother Willem, went to work for Trio. In 1956, the brothers benefited from the Suez crisis. The price of oil skyrocketed.

They used the profits from their company to start Artone, and appointed their former music dealer John Vis as the director. In America, they contracted artists like Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald, Dave Brubeck, Chuck Berry, Frank Sinatra, and The Supremes. Casper Slinger was a modern entrepreneur. Managers were given a house and a car, and before winter all employees got a flu pill: especially during the Christmas season, operations at Artone were in full swing. In 1958, Artone bought a company that made album sleeves and opened their own record pressing facility. In 1966, the American company CBS gained a 50 percent interest in Artone.

Three years later the Americans wanted Slinger as their European director, but he had to step down following brain surgery. He sold his shares and moved to the South of France. His wife Adriana had lived there since 1953, the first ten years on a boat in Menton. In those days, Slinger drove back and forth every weekend in his sports car.

For Slinger, the South of France was the most beautiful place on earth, says his daughter Ariane (53). 'He also lived in Monaco and Cannes, always overlooking the sea. He regularly bought houses and sold them again once they were renovated. A passionate man who loved good restaurants, working in the garden, sailing his boat, and music.' Slinger traded on the stock exchange with varying degrees of success. He did not shy away from risky investments, and as a result lost a fortune. For his wife and daughters, he was loving and caring. As he grew older, he also grew milder. Ariane: 'He retreated more and more into his own cocoon.' 'A real gentleman,' says his wife Adriana (83), with whom he lived for 63 years.