GOT JAZZ? FOR THESE KIDS IT’S JUST ESSENTIAL!

On May 12 over 400 high school jazz students, Wynton Marsalis, members of the JALC Orchestra, parents and supporters gathered together at Columbus Circle Park in support of arts education nationwide. Their #UnitedWeSwing Second Line parade kicked off the 22nd annual ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON High School Jazz Band Competition & Festival — the largest gathering of high school age jazz musicians in America.

Newark Academy has its best finish at Essentially Ellington national competition

See page 25
Prez Sez
By Mike Katz President, NJJS

Our April Jazz Social featured singer, pianist and washboard player Betty Comora. Formerly a New Jersey resident, Ms. Comora now lives in Sarasota. She played to a large audience, and was accompanied by bassist Bill Crow, the same Bill Crow who writes the “From the Crow’s Nest” column that appears in Jersey Jazz. Betty’s grandson, Teddy, a student at Cornell University, sat in on piano for several numbers.

■ Our May social will feature the winners of this year’s New Jersey Jazz Society scholarships playing together, an annual program which was moved to the Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp to the Socials last year. These students represent the jazz studies programs at New Jersey City College, William Paterson University, Rowan University and Rutgers University, and have been selected as the scholarship winners by the respective faculty members of the schools which they attend. Each will receive a check for $1,000.00. Additional funding for this year’s scholarship program was provided by earmarked donations from family and friends of Don Robertson, who passed away last year. As I mentioned last month, our Socials have been outstanding this year, and I will take this opportunity to thank Board members Mitchell Seidel and James Pansulla for their efforts in support of the Socials, and Morris Arts (formerly the Arts Council of the Morris Area) and the NJ State Council for the Arts, for providing funding which has greatly enhanced our ability to obtain outstanding performers for these programs.

■ Many of you are familiar with DIVA, the all-female jazz big band led by drummer Sherrie Maricle. I first heard them some 15 or so years ago at the NJJS Jazzfest at Fairleigh Dickinson University, and they truly blew me away. Quite a few musicians who are well known to our members have been part of the group, including pianist Tomoko Ohno and bassist Nicki Parrott, to name just some of them. This year marks the band’s twenty-fifth anniversary, and they are celebrating the occasion by issuing a special CD in conjunction with a fundraising effort through the crowdfunding website ArtistShare. Additional information about DIVA and the CD is elsewhere in this issue, and I hope that readers will participate. Sherrie and DIVA have been great friends of NJJS over the years, having performed in various configurations at many of our events.

■ Speaking of anniversaries, 2017 marks the 45th anniversary of the New Jersey Jazz Society and to commemorate this milestone, we’re planning a gala concert on Sunday afternoon, October 22, featuring New Jersey-based musicians. The concert will be at the Dorothy Young Center at Drew University in Madison, which many readers will recall was the site of our highly successful 40th anniversary concert in 2013 (if you’re wondering about the math, that concert was originally scheduled to take place in November of 2012, but had to be postponed due to the widespread power outages which followed Hurricane Sandy). A committee headed by Board member Cydney Halpin is hard at work on plans for the concert, so mark your calendars and further details will be forthcoming. We are seeking sponsors and supporters for this event; for more information please email Cydney at chalpin@earthlink.net.
April 30 was the sixth annual world wide International Jazz Day, proclaimed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The day culminated in an “All-Star Global Concert” which took place in Havana, Cuba and featured Herbie Hancock, in his capacities of UNESCO Good Will Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue and co-artistic director, along with Cuban pianist and bandleader Chucho Valdés. American jazz luminaries including Regina Carter, Esperanza Spalding, Kurt Elling, Marcus Miller and Antonio Hart participated, along with jazz musicians from numerous other countries. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, said in a statement, “UNESCO is proud to be associated once again with the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, as well as with the Instituto Cubano de la Música, to raise the flag for jazz, for freedom, for creativity, for diversity and for unity. This year’s focus on Cuba is testament to the power of jazz to build bridges and join women and men together around shared values and aspirations.”

We celebrated International Jazz Day [April 30] locally and attended the last of this year’s “Music in the Moonlight” jazz concerts at Luna Stage in West Orange featuring saxophonist Don Braden and his quartet. Earlier concerts this season featured trumpeter Claudio Roditi, vocalist Vanessa Perea and guitarist Paul Meyers. Mr. Braden’s program was entitled “Earth, Wind and Wonder” and featured music by Earth Wind & Fire and Stevie Wonder in jazz mode. It played to a full house and was most enjoyable. A CD of the music will be released this fall.

I later learned from NJJS Board member Sanford Josephson, director of the series, that Luna Stage is going through a management transition. According to Cheryl Katz, who is stepping down as artistic director after next season, “the board loves the jazz series” but “our staff has suggested putting it on hold for next season and putting all resources into marketing our main stage. It is possible that, as the board reconsiders the mission and scope of community impact it wishes the theatre to have, that it will make sense to reinstate the series in the near future,” he added. Let’s hope so. It’s a terrific setting for jazz and Sandy tells me local artists have been lining up to play the there.

On May 1 we saw pianist Stephanie Trick for the first time at the Bickford Jazz Showcase in Morristown. Together with her husband, Paolo Alderighi, a terrific pianist in his own right, they performed an outstanding program of stride, boogie-woogie and other styles. The couple live in St. Louis and Milan and have performed in many parts of the U.S. and Europe. We’re looking forward to upcoming concerts at the Bickford Theater for the remainder of the spring and during the summer, including performances by Rio Clemente, Neville Dickie and the Midiri Brothers, Dan Levinson, Bria Skonberg and the Full Count Jazz Band. See the ‘Round Jersey column and the www.njjs.org for dates and other information.

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Jazz Trivia
By O. Howie Ponder
(answers on page 44)

Sign of the (Jazz) Times

The magazine Jazz Times published two polls in its March issue, one gauging its readers’ favorite artists and the second surveying jazz critics. Out of 39 categories, readers and critics concurred only eight times on their #1 choices. Can you identify the eight based on these brief descriptions?

1. Syndicated radio program: Bassist Christian McBride hosts this NPR show heard on WBGO and also archived for streaming.
2. Jazz club: You know it, even if you’ve never descended that Village staircase. Opened in 1935, all jazz since ’57.
3. Trumpeter/cornetist/flugelhornist: The Oakland native signed with Blue Note in 2011 and made a highly rated album, When the Heart Emerges Glistening. The Thelonious Monk competition winner in 2007 has played with a who’s who jazz roster: Vijay Iyer, Esperanza Spalding, Jack DeJohnette, Jason Moran…and Kendrick Lamar.
4. Clarinetist: The Tel Aviv-born artist’s obvious delight in making music adds to its charm. The perennial poll winner came to the U.S. in 1996 and is a festival favorite. Recently is leading a tentet with musical partners from around the globe.
5. Baritone Sax: Another consistent poll winner. The 61-year-old played in and recorded with a bevy of great big bands: Woody Herman, Village Vanguard, Dizzy Gillespie, Carla Bley and Gerald Wilson. The 1991 album Homage was a memorial to a chief influence, Pepper Adams.
6. Violinist: A career highlight for the Motor City native was an invitation from Genoa, Italy, to play the 1743 violin once owned by Paganini in concert. In recent years the artist has led small groups exploring world music and the roots of Southern music.
7. Female vocalist: Her 2013 album WomanChild earned a Grammy nomination and propelled her onto the national jazz stage. Born in Miami to a French mother and Haitian father, she studied at the Darius Milhaud Conservatory in France and discovered her passion for jazz.

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The Editor’s Pick
By Tony Mottola
Jersey Jazz Editor

THE JAZZ GARDEN
The Newark Museum’s Summer Jazz Series Returns for its 51st Year

Buster Williams, a serene musician who played a near continuous set of meditative music at a 2014 Jazz in the Garden performance, gazed out from the bandstand at the large midday workweek crowd and quipped, “I’m glad to see you all have money, because obviously you don’t have jobs!”

There may well be a few millionaires mingling on the great lawn, but the large crowds that flock to the long-running summer Thursday afternoon series at the Newark Museum are mainly a convivial gaggle of retirees, jazzniks and downtown office workers in search of a leisurely summer picnic lunch. And the modest $5 admission won’t dent your wallet all that much (museum members and children are free). After all, the top-flight artists presented there would run many times that at the Standard or Birdland. That’s due, no doubt, to the wizardry of longtime Jazz in the Garden curator Sheila Anderson, who seems able to get just about anybody on the phone and convince them to pop over to Newark for a morning interview with WBGO’s Gary Walker and an early afternoon performance in the beautiful Alice Ransom Dreyfuss Memorial Garden.

For this season, Ms. Anderson has once again booked a superb lineup. The five Thursday artists are: Tubaist Howard Johnson (July 6), DIVA quintet Five Play (July 13), guitarist Russell Malone (July 20), vocalist Claudia Acuña (July 27), and vibraphonist Stefan Harris (August 3). Performances are from 12:15 to 1:45 pm. Lunch is available for purchase, brown-baggers are welcome.

This year’s series also includes two 6:30 pm Friday evening performances ($15/members, $25/non-members) — Ulysses Owens Jr. & Friends present a tribute to Ella and Sarah, featuring Alyson Williams and Brianna Thomas on June 23, and pianist Davell Crawford performs on August 11.

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For more information visit www.newarkmuseum.org.

One of the sculptures in the Newark Museum’s Alice Ransom Dreyfuss Memorial Garden.
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Big Band in the Sky

Melinda Helen Matthews (Linda Hopkins), 92, vocalist, December 14, 1924, New Orleans – April 10, 2017, Milwaukee.

Sometime in the late 1940s, Hopkins heard Bessie Smith sing at the Palace Theater in New Orleans. She recounted the experience to the Los Angeles Times’ Leonard Feather in 1975: “She wasn’t a big star no more — this was a year or two before she died — but when I heard ‘Empty Bed Blues’ and watched those fringes moving as she swayed on that stage, I sat right up in my seat and said to myself, ‘that’s it.’”

Almost 30 years later, in October 1975, she opened on Broadway in Me and Bessie, a show she created and performed with singer/songwriter Will Holt. According to The New York Times’ William Grimes (April 11, 2017), “With spare accompaniment, she held the stage for an entire evening, performing more than 20 of Smith’s songs and summoning the events of her life.” The show ran for 453 performances, a record at that time for a one-woman show on Broadway.

Hopkins made her Broadway debut in 1970 in Purlie, starring Cleavon Little and Melba Moore. Although she had a minor role, her performance of “Walk Him Up the Stairs,” a gospel solo with choir, got her noticed. In 1972, she won a Tony for best performance by a featured artist in Inner City, a musical based on a book of urban Mother Goose tales by Eve Merriam. The show did not have a long run, but Hopkins’ performance drew raves from The New York Times drama critic Walter Kerr. “So far as I’m concerned,” he wrote, “they can throw away the rest of Inner City and just let a lady named Linda Hopkins stand there all night, tapping one foot slightly, opening her composed mouth to let miraculous sounds come out of it, reaching out her arms to the balcony as though to complete its curve and make the world come full circle, shaking her head very slightly in deep private worry as she stalks to the portals, done with a song. She is magnificent.”

In 1989, Hopkins joined fellow blues singers Ruth Brown and Carrie Smith in Black and Blue, a Broadway musical celebrating the Cotton Club in the 1920s and ’30s. She was nominated for best performance by an actress in a leading role in a musical, but lost out to Brown.

Her singing career began in a church choir when she was three years old. At age 11, she telephoned Mahalia Jackson to invite her to sing at the choir’s fundraiser. Jackson agreed, not knowing that she was being invited by a young girl. Impressed by Hopkins’ performance of “God Shall Wipe Your Tears Away,” Jackson arranged for her to join an all-women gospel group in New Orleans called the Southern Harps, a group she remained with for 11 years. In the 1950s and early ’60s, she made several blues recordings with the Johnny Otis Orchestra and recorded rhythm & blues songs on several labels, scoring a hit on the Brunswick label in 1962 in a duet with Jackie Wilson on “Shake a Hand,” written by trumpeter/bandleader Joe Morris.

Hopkins continued performing, often at Sweetwater’s in New York City, until she suffered a stroke in 2007. She has no known survivors.

Bob Cunningham, bassist, 82, December 28, 1934, Cleveland – April 1, 2017, New York City. In the mid-1990s, Cunningham was part of a trio called the 3B’s, featuring Bross Townsend on piano and drummer Bernard Purdie. They self-produced two albums, After Hours with the 3B’s and Smoothin’ and Groovin’ with the 3B’s. Steven McDonald, in a review for AllMusic, described After Hours as “a delight from start to finish, with all the participants basically out for a good time.”

Though he did not record many albums as a leader, Cunningham, known for his bow technique for the bass, appeared as a sideman on several classic recordings such as Dizzy Gillespie’s An Electrifying Evening with the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet (Verve: 1961), saxophonist Gary Bartz’s Home (Milestone: 1970), and Freddie Hubbard’s Backlash (Atlantic: 1970). He was also a first-call bassist for such headliners as drummers Art Blakey and Max Roach and pianist Junior Mance.

Cunningham was an instructor for the Jazzmobile, the non-profit organization that brings jazz performances and education to many communities throughout New York City. Jazzmobile executive director and CEO Robin Bell-Stevens told the Amsterdam News that, “Students often raved about his teaching technique and skills.”

He is survived by his wife, Bondi who is planning a memorial service at a later date.

Allan Holdsworth, 70, guitarist, August 6, 1946, Bradford, England – April 16, 2017, Vista, CA. Holdsworth bridged the worlds of jazz and progressive rock, making a major impact on both styles of music. Writing on the npr.org website the day after Holdsworth’s death, David Adler said he “not only changed guitar, but also created a musical language entirely his own.” Although Holdsworth surfaced on the music scene in the late 1960s, Adler believes he “hit his stride in the mid-’70s with sideman appearances in major groups on the jazz-fusion and prog-rock circuits. He succeeded John McLaughlin in a new incarnation of Tony Williams Lifetime and also worked with Soft Machine, Pierre Moerlen’s Gong and fusion violinist Jean-Luc Ponty.”

Pointing out that Holdsworth “drew from jazz, rock, and contemporary classical music,” the Los Angeles Times’ George Varga (April 17, 2017), added that he was “inspired by jazz greats Charlie Parker and John Coltrane...” Holdsworth wanted to play saxophone as a youth, but, according to Varga, “his family could not afford one.” In a 1987 San Diego Union-Tribune interview, Holdsworth said, “I wanted to play a wind instrument because it was closer to the human voice than anything else. You can shape the sound by blowing, as opposed to a percussive instrument like the guitar. That is why I tried very hard to make the guitar a non-percussive instrument.”

continued on page 10
Monday, July 17 • 7:30 p.m.
WP Summer Jazz Workshop Faculty
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BIG BAND IN THE SKY
continued from page 8

He was able to incorporate Coltrane’s sound and style into his guitar playing. In a 2005 interview with Adler in JazzTimes magazine, jazz guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel said, “To me, he’s the only guitarist dealing with the kind of language Coltrane was dealing with — those long Slonimsky patterns that evolve differently through different registers in a very precise way, but pure like a prism. That’s a big part of what I hear, that clarity of harmonic unfolding and melodic intricacy.” (Nicolás Slonimsky was a Russian-American contemporary conductor, composer, and pianist).

Adler pointed out that Holdsworth’s early guitar influences were Joe Pass, Django Reinhardt, and Charlie Christian. “He was working widely on the club circuit in England by his 20s,” Adler wrote, “catching the ear of tenor saxophonist Ray Warleigh, who brought him into the jazz scene at places like Ronnie Scott’s.”

When jazz guitarist/vocalist George Benson saw Holdsworth perform at a 1975 New York club date, he said, “He sure made an impression on me; he does things I have not heard the guitar do. He’s not trying new things, he’s mastering them.” Pianist Geoffrey Keezer called Holdsworth, “one of my biggest musical heroes and a true unsung guitar influence. When I first heard jazz on the radio, and I was hooked.” His wife, Constance Bigony told Marquard that musicians such as bassist Charles Mingus and trumpeter Chet Baker were “people who really moved me” while in LA. He also had an unusual encounter with baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. “He’d listen to Gerry Mulligan in a record shop,” Bigony said, “and one day, Jerry Mulligan walks by. Steve held up the record album, and Mulligan gave him a thumbs-up.” Bigony was Schwartz’s second wife. A visual artist, she met him while she was waiting tables in 1989 at Ryles Jazz Club in Boston. She was also a fan of his radio show. They married six years later. “His reputation preceded him,” Bigony told Marquard, “so when I finally met him, it was like, ‘Wow, this is the Steve Schwartz.’ I was really impressed. I thought, ‘This guy is really cool.’ I was enthralled.”

In addition to Bigony, Schwartz is survived by two sons, Eric of Dallas and Peter of Boca Raton, FL; a daughter, Jamie of Newton, MA; a stepdaughter, Abigail Yablonsky of San Diego; and six grandchildren.

Steve Schwartz, 74, jazz radio host, April 8, 1942, Boston — March 25, 2017, Milton, MA. When Boston public radio station WGBH ended Schwartz’s Friday night jazz show in 2012 to make room for more news and information programming, jazz fans were so upset they not only protested but held a jazz funeral. His last program aired on July 6, 2012, and he signed off by saying, “As you may or may not have heard, this is my last program for WGBH radio -- starting here back in 1985 and working my way towards bringing you jazz on a Friday night. And, this will wind it up.”

Eric Jackson, who continues to host a jazz show on weekends at WGBH, told the Boston Globe’s Bryan Marquard that Schwartz, “was knowledgeable about the music. He knew the music . . . Steve was this warm presence who invited you in when he was on the air with the sound of his voice and the music he played . . . He advertised his show, especially in the earlier years, as ‘acoustic jazz’, which says a lot about his musical tastes. In later years, he would surprise me when I’d hear something with a little electric piano in it.”

Schwartz’s interest in jazz was sparked when his family moved briefly from Massachusetts to Los Angeles when he was 15 years old. In an interview on The Arts Fuse website, he said, “It was there that I first heard jazz on the radio, and I was hooked.” His wife, Constance Bigony told Marquard that musicians such as bassist Charles Mingus and trumpeter Chet Baker were “people who really moved me” while in LA. He also had an unusual encounter with baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. “He’d listen to Gerry Mulligan in a record shop,” Bigony said, “and one day, Jerry Mulligan walks by. Steve held up the record album, and Mulligan gave him a thumbs-up.”

For 25 years, the all-female DIVA Jazz Orchestra has toured the world, performing with many notable icons in jazz.

While the group is rooted in the tradition of the historic big bands, they have always commissioned their music with the goal of providing each player a means to express their unique identity, while creating the band’s distinct personality and rich history. The 25 year benchmark has inspired music director/drummer Sherrie Maricle to task herself and nine other band members to compose and arrange a new piece for their first all-original DIVA Plays CD recording: 10 original writers composing for 15 friends in one amazing band.

It’s DIVA’s mission to continue to evolve their powerful and precise ensemble sound through the exceptional individual talent within the band and their extraordinary composers and arrangers. Now they’re inviting their many fans to join in the DIVA Jazz Orchestra’s 25th ArtistShare Anniversary Project.

Participants will have access to the creative process as they prepare and record new music for this inspired new project. Watch the music grow, from the earliest writing stages, to the first rehearsals, and finally the recording session. There are seven levels of “Participant Offers” for the project beginning at $12.95 for fans to consider.

To learn more about the project, including the variety of special benefits offered, and see a promotional video by Sherrie Maricle just visit ArtistShare.com and enter “DIVA” in the search box.

Sanford Josephson is the author of Jazz Notes: Interviews Across the Generations and Jen’s Journey: The Life and Music of Gerry Mulligan. He has written extensively about jazz musicians in a variety of publications.
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Playing Tribute: Barbara Carroll’s Friends Fill Birdland

By Schaan Fox

On Saturday April 15, Birdland hosted a tribute to Barbara Carroll. The grand dame had finished her storied career at this club in 2017 after starting at The Downbeat Club in 1947. It reads like a return to her bebop roots. She made her mark when the consensus was that in order to really play bebop piano one needed to be a male. She persisted, winning a host of fans that included greats like Dizzy Gillespie, and endured triumphantly.

The house was packed with Barbara’s fans, friends and family, when the club’s owner, Gianni Valenti, spoke briefly. He noted how pleased he was that Barbara had agreed to play there, and that her last recording was Barbara Carroll Plays at Birdland. He then invited everyone to take a free copy of the CD as a memento of the special event. Mark Stroock, the great lady’s husband, next spoke, and made even briefer remarks including, “Barbara loved you all, but she loved the piano more.”

Bill Charlap both hosted and played. He started by saying, “When I was nine years old, I turned on the television and saw a lady at the piano playing Stevie Wonder’s ‘Isn’t She Lovely.’ There was a bassist and a drummer and the trio sounded great. She was relaxed and elegant. Her sound was unlike anything I’d ever heard. I thought to myself, ‘That’s what I want to do someday.’” Barbara Carroll’s art will always stand as a testament to the sophistication and urbanity of the golden age of New York City. A trailblazer for women and a modernist, she equally and effortlessly embraced the musical innovations of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie as well as the songwriting genius of Rodgers and Hart to Stephen Sondheim. I admired her deeply and am honored to have been her friend.

He then introduced Jay Leonhart, Barbara’s bassist for so many years. They first played “Sophisticated Lady.” Next Aaron Weinstein, looking much younger than his 31 years, wryly informed the crowd that of everyone there, “I knew Barbara Carroll the longest.” He then truthfully noted that when he did meet her, she became “an inspiration and revelation.” After he finished, Eric Comstock asserted that, “I’ve known Barbara almost as long as Aaron.” He then related how, as he once struggled to reach his seat on an overstuffed plane, he spotted Barbara Carroll squeezed next to Margret Whiting in row 37. Barbara evaluated their situation with, “Here we are in steerage.”

Renee Rosnes followed and recalled first meeting Barbara at a jazz festival in 1991. She not only shared the stage with the lady who had helped pave her way, but also a dressing room. While it was all a thrilling memory, what stood out was being next to Barbara for the concluding bows. Her artistic progenitor took Renee’s hand saying, “Us girls got to stick together.” Marilyn Maye said that she only knew Barbara for ten years, but always had great respect for her talents. Finally, Jay told one story from that long association with Ms. Carroll. Once they made an unsuccessful search for new material. She started with the letter A in a fake book and stopped four hours later having progressed only into letter C. She knew all the listed songs, as well as almost all the lyrics and composers. As she regaled him with stories the titles brought to her mind, he wished she were doing it as a PBS special, for it was an amazing history of the business of show.

Bill Charlap next invited to the stage Renee Rosnes, and Ken Peplowski, whom he called “a miracle of a creative artist.” Ken thanked him for, “reading the introduction that I wrote.” He then recalled a gig he shared with Barbara in a rival location. He didn’t want to use its name. “Let’s just call it ‘Izzy’s Club Pepsi Cola.’” He noted that the famed pianist/singer so loved playing piano with the band, “we had to remind her to sing.”

Sandy Stewart told the audience that Barbara Carroll and Mark Stroock were “the most romantic teen couple I knew.” Decades before, Barbara had told her that she was going on a date with Mark. As they talked about it, Sandy said, “This is serious.” Surprised, Barbara responded, “I haven’t been out with him yet. Are you a witch?” Sandy looked to the audience, and with grand theatricality said, “We…” It delighted everyone. She then sang a beautifully heartfelt “After You, Who?” and garnered more applause.

John Pizzarelli then explained why he was following Sandy Stewart, “I drew the short straw.” He added, “It is an honor to be here on another glorious New York night.” He then performed “Just the Way You Look Tonight” with a polish that increased that glory. He easily charmed the room with his musicality and display of calm sophistication. He was the fitting penultimate performer for the set.

Each artist had played beautifully, perhaps inspired by both their peers on stage as well as the others scattered among their attentive fans. The conclusion had every artist on the stage. Bill then asked the audience to use the lyrics on every table and join the final number that Barbara did so well. We all sang Steven Sondheim’s “Old Friends.” Then the crowd dissolved into an exuberant mass. As I was with Jay, Barbara’s daughter thanked him and assured him that her mother would have loved it — as did we.
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June 24 “End of Junebug” Concert at the Old Franklin Schoolhouse (491 Middlesex Avenue):
8:30 pm - Coach N Commando; 10:00 pm - Lowlight

Art “Live” Events: Live glassblowing and pottery wheel demonstrations • Surrealism-in-action: four painters on one canvas • Art e Vino Kids and Adults Painting Party • Window Gallery Competition • Metuchen Library Art Gallery • Annual Junebug sculpture by Madison NJ-based Dan Fenelon • Hailey’s Beer and Novita Wine Gardens

Art Exhibits, Art Events, Live Music and Food!
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Junebug main stage concerts are sponsored by The Metuchen Arts Council and Metuchen Recreation, with generous support from the Metuchen Savings Bank and the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders/Middlesex County Cultural & Heritage Commission/the NJ State Council on the Arts.
‘Big Band’ Concert/Lecture Series Continues in Woodbridge with Diane Moser Band

The Barron Arts Center’s “Legends of New Jersey Big Band” 2017 concert and lecture series continues in Woodbridge this month with a scholarly presentation on Duke Ellington and a concert by Diane Moser’s Composers Big Band.

On June 7, jazz scholar Michael Conklin, an adjunct professor at The College of New Jersey, will present “Beyond Category: The Life and Music of Duke Ellington” at 7 pm at the Barron Arts Center at 582 Rahway Avenue in Woodbridge. The program will trace Ellington’s musical life from his beginnings in 1920s Harlem through his prolific career to his death in 1974. Audio and video will be used to illustrate the magnitude of Ellington’s contributions to the American aesthetic. The lecture is free, but reservations are essential. Call 732-634-0413.

Then on June 16 the series concludes with a concert by Diane Moser’s Composers Big Band. This 17-piece big band of dedicated musicians was formed for the purpose of developing and presenting new big band music. Moser has been a featured performer and composer throughout the U.S. with jazz ensembles, big bands, orchestras, chamber music ensembles, dance companies, and theater companies. She earned a B.A. from Empire State College in New York and an M.M. in Jazz Piano from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Harold Danko and Jaki Byard.

As a leader, Diane currently has several ensembles that express her wide diversity of musical interests. Presenting monthly concerts beginning in January of 1997 and currently in residence at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair, Diane Moser’s Composers BigBand features the music of its 11 resident composers, and has featured over 100 guest composers and performers as well.

The June 11 concert takes place at 7:30 pm at the Woodbridge High School Auditorium at 1 Samuel Lupo Place. It’s free and no reservation is required.

The series began in March with a performance by the Jazz Lobsters. Last month lectures were presented on the history of the Big Band Era by Samuel F. Marcone, professor of music at Wiliam Paterson University, and the history of swing music by Michael Conklin. Funding for the series is provided by the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, the Middlesex County Freeholder Board and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.
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   Danny Coots – drums
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Talking Jazz
A Jersey Jazz Interview With Martin Wind

When I mentioned to Sherrie Maricle, the drummer and leader of the DIVA jazz orchestra, that I was interviewing bassist Martin Wind, her immediate response was, “He’s awesome. I love Martin’s playing.” Naturally, I agreed. I first became aware of Martin when he was playing with pianist Dena DeRose, and I soon noticed him backing up other great artists. He is yet one more important cultural asset that came to America as a student, liked what he found, and stayed. We spoke in early February. I kept the very start of our interview because he started with a joke.

JJ: Is this still a good time to do the interview?
MW: Yes, you are four minutes late. [Laughing]
JJ: Ah, yes you are from Germany. [Laughing]
MW: Yes, exactly.
JJ: Well, is there anything you would like to talk about?
MW: In April, I’m recording my next studio album. I think my last studio album, Get It? was in 2008. I’m going to record at Maggie’s Farm in Pennsylvania just across the river from Frenchtown, New Jersey. I’m going to be there for two days with different bands. The first will be Scott Robinson, Jim McNelly on piano, Matt Wilson on drums and Ingrid Jenson playing trumpet. The second day will also be Scott, Bill Cunliffe playing piano, and hopefully some Hammond B-3 overdubs, Anat Cohen, Duduka Da Fonseca and Maucha Adnet, who have been wonderful people and friends. I remember performing with them last year in Baltimore. We were advertised as the Brazilian All-Stars. Here I am coming from the most northern city in Germany, some people consider me a Viking, and I found myself in the Brazilian All-Star Band. I loved it. I’m really excited. I wrote a lot of new material and all these amazing musicians agreed to be part of it. I was working on my February newsletter and reflecting on things that just happened, like the evening at the Kitano with Scott Robinson, Helen Sung, and Peter van Nostrand, which was a sensational evening of music. Scott really has become the voice and main interpreter of my music for the last ten years or so. That I really appreciate.

I’m playing with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra tomorrow. Every February they are there eight days in a row. I wrote about my first time playing with the band. Eight or nine years ago, I was on a jazz cruise and met Dennis Irwin who was their regular bass player. I expressed my interest in playing that book with that amazing band. Sure enough a few weeks later, he hurt his wrist and couldn’t play. I got my chance. I was early, and there was nobody in the club. I played a few notes and it just blew me away how warm, fat and crystal clear my bass sounded. I’ve never heard my instrument sound like

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Bickford Summer Jazzfest

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TALKING JAZZ/MARTIN WIND
continued from page 16

that before. It was overwhelming. There is a reason why so many incredible albums have been made there.

Dennis showed up and sat at the bar all evening. I remember that Jim McNeely was playing and during the first set we played Jim’s “Don’t Even Ask.” That starts with the bass playing the melody with the tenor sax. Later on there is a solo section for the bass. Normally you have a four-bar and eight-bar phrases. This was three- and six-bar phrases, what you expect from Jim McNeely. At one point the band dropped out completely for an open bass solo. I had to play in the upper register to bring the band back in. All of that without rehearsal, the composer at the piano, and the bass player at the bar; I thought, “Wow. I’m in New York alright.” It was sink or swim for sure.

JJ: Did they say anything when it was over?

MW: They have people like Richard Davis, George Mraz, Marc Johnson and Rufus Reid play with them, so what are they going to say? But they still call me and trust me. That is all I need to know. It is great to play there. Some of those charts are still hand written by Thad Jones. A lot of the bass lines were written out quarter note by quarter note because Thad really wanted Richard Davis to play it. He was afraid Richard would just go off because he played as freely as any bass player has ever played in a big band, which I love. He played in that band as if he was in a piano trio or something like that.

JJ: Since you mentioned him, what are your memories of Dennis Irwin?

MW: What can I say about him? First of all I played last Monday with the band and right at the beginning of the first tune, the bass amp stopped working. Needless to say, there was no time to get a replacement. They do have a microphone in front of the bass, so people in the audience were able to hear me, but I had to play really, really hard to hear myself and hope that the band would hear me. That is the way Dennis played for years. He never used an amplifier. He had really high action, a very physical way of playing.

I remember sitting in a few times, with him playing with Ted Rosenthal’s trio and some other band. It was just a major struggle playing his instrument. [Chuckles] He once told me that if he didn’t play it for two or three days, then he could barely play his own instrument. That gave me an appreciation to the kind of commitment that he put into providing that kind of sound. It was very humbling.

He was a fascinating personality. He started out as a clarinet major and loved classical music. He used to talk about that so much. That was something we shared. I have a classical background. I have a diploma as an orchestra musician from my time at the conservatory in Cologne. He was really happy to share and always telling stories. I actually know more about him through people that used to spend a lot of time with him. He was into literature; always reading poems and books. He was not the flashiest of all bass players, but boy, could he provide a sound and a vibe. That was a big lesson for me.

JJ: I’m still upset that he died because he couldn’t afford medical care.

MW: Yeah, he waited way too long before seeking help, and at that point it was just too late. One of the big reasons he didn’t go was the lack of coverage.

JJ: Are there any other members of your family who have made music their career?

MW: No. I didn’t know any professional musicians when I was growing up, and it was not that my parents were playing Louis Armstrong recordings when I was still in diapers. The initial contact for me with music in general was through my high school. I was very fortunate to be at a school where we had a really good orchestra and a big band that would actually tour in the United States every few years. When I was 15, I was approached by the band director who knew that I played the guitar. He asked if I wanted to play electric bass in that big band. I said, “Sure. I’m not going to be a bass player.” I just took the two top strings of my guitar and practiced that way. Eventually I got my first electric bass. I just came home from school one day, and there it was. I’m still in awe thinking about that. It was a Fender bass and I don’t know why I did it, but I actually sold it to buy a different instrument. I would love to have that.

Then I was brought together with a classical bassist from the United States, Elmer Turnage. After doing his military service, he decided to stay in Germany. He played bass and tuba in my little hometown orchestra. He was not very happy there. He loved jazz and would play me recordings. The very first album that I completely wore out was an album by Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen playing duo with Philip Catherine, the great Belgian guitarist. I was about 17 and had just started playing the upright bass. I heard that album and thought, “I guess that is how everybody plays jazz bass.” I had no idea that Niels happened to be one of the most amazing bassists. His intonation, dexterity, how melodically he played on the instrument obviously set the bar really, really high right from the beginning. Almost 30 years later I got to play with Philip. We have been playing duo for three or four years.

JJ: Are your sons interested in musical careers?
MW: Not as careers, but they are extremely musical, if I may say that myself. They both were taking piano lessons for quite some time. My younger son still goes. My eldest took up the guitar and just last night played us a new song that he is working on. It sounded beautiful. All I can ask for is that they have music in their lives. I know how hard it is to make it a profession. I’m perfectly fine with them doing something else as long as they do it with passion and are happy with it.

JJ: The German Academic Exchange Service played an important role in your coming to New York. Would you tell us about that and your early years here?

MW: It’s a program sponsored by the German government. You have to have completed a degree in Germany to qualify. I did my diploma as an orchestra musician at the conservatory in Cologne. After that I was a freelance musician for a couple of years playing all over Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and working with a lot of American groups. Then the idea of coming to New York City to study formed and I applied for this scholarship. I had to play in front of a committee, and I qualified. They give a monthly amount to live and an amount towards tuition. I was somewhat financially secure even with the expenses of living in New York City.

I’m thankful that I got the opportunity to come here and study at NYU through the bassist Mike Richmond who I met as a member of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra in Germany. I was one of the founding members in ’87 or ’88, and he used to come frequently as a teacher. When I said I wanted to study in New York, he hooked me up with that institution. That turned out to be perfect for me. I got to NYU because nobody really knew of the jazz program back then.

I was under everybody’s radar when I came, and I was the best bass player in the program. They had a master class program and would bring in these amazing musicians that would play with a student rhythm section. I arrived in August of ’96, and within weeks I was playing with people like Joe Lovano, Joey Baron, Bob Mintzer, Michael Brecker, Kenny Werner and the list goes on and on. That was exactly the purpose of me moving to New York City to study formed and I applied for this scholarship. I had to play in front of a committee, and I qualified. They give a monthly amount to live and an amount towards tuition. I was somewhat financially secure even with the expenses of living in New York City.

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TALKING JAZZ/MARTIN WIND
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After he stopped working for the festival he started this beautiful label called Edition Longplay. He is also a knowledgeable art collector, so he combined some of his favorite pieces of art and had people record music along with that. He offered me to be on this label. What I offered him was to do some solo bass and give him a few tracks with Bill Mays and Matt Wilson. That’s what resulted in that recording. I just did a new one for him with my friend and duo partner for more than 20 years, Ulf Meyer. I’m very proud to be on his label.

JJ: Why were only 500 copies of the CD made?

MW: It has that flair of being a collector’s item one day. Actually he just told me he is not going to continue. He just can’t afford it anymore. It was really an expensive hobby, and there are so many LPs being produced right now you have to beg the good companies to print yours. The prices are getting out of hand, and he’s not selling enough even if he is only printing 500.

JJ: When and why did you move to New Jersey?

MW: It will be 14 years in April. When I moved here in the late summer of ‘96, I ended up in Astoria Queens. Then I moved in with my girlfriend. We have been married for almost 20 years. We wanted our own place and to be around good public schools, which we couldn’t find in New York. That is how we ended up here in Teaneck. So many of our peers have lived and are still living here. I pride myself that I am living here with Rufus Reid and Ray Drummond and that Sam Jones, the Adderley brothers, Milt Jackson, and a list that goes on and on used to live here. Joe La Barbera told me that Bill Evans lived in Teaneck then he moved to Fort Lee. I feel a connection to the place because of its history.

JJ: Has anything of significance in your career happened in New Jersey?

MW: I never got to record with Rudy Van Gelder, unfortunately. There is a new studio, Trading 8s in Paramus and I’ve recorded albums there with Anat Cohen, Ken Peplowski, Gary Smulyan, Bill Mays and many people. Shanghai Jazz was one of my very first gigs after moving to town. I played a trio concert there with Vic Juris, the great guitarist, and Jeff Hirshfield on drums. They probably asked me because I had a car. I remember picking Jeff up and driving out to Madison. That was the first time I met Vic, and David Niu and Martha Chang, the co-owners of Shanghai Jazz. It is amazing that they are still around having music almost every night. It is an important place for us in New Jersey for sure.

JJ: Do you have any souvenirs of your career that visitors to your home might see?

MW: I have a few posters of concerts that were really meaningful to me. Over the last few years I’ve had some great experiences with Scott, Bill Cunliffe on piano and Joe La Barbera on drums. We did a few concerts in Italy with an orchestra, a tribute to Bill Evans with music he had written or played and that resulted in the album Turn Off The Stars. I have a poster of that. Just last summer I took that same group to my hometown Flensburg, Germany and we played three concerts with the orchestra I grew up listening to. That was very, very special, obviously. The second half of the concert was the repertoire of the Bill Evans tribute. The first half the orchestra played a Gershwin overture and then we played a special arrangement of “Rhapsody in Blue” that included bass and drums.

I was also commissioned to write an original piece for the orchestra and I decided to write a suite with four movements. Each movement represents the four main stages in my life so far: My upbringing in Flensburg, my time in the military band, my classical studies in Cologne and then New York City. Each suite features a different member of the quartet. I worked probably six or seven months on that. It ended up being close to 30 minutes and was an overwhelming experience. Also, the orchestra members loved working with us, playing that piece and how it was received by the audiences in my hometown. So I have a poster of that hanging in my house.

I just did the Jazz on the Mountain Festival at the Mohonk Mountain House. I played a set with my quartet: Scott, Bill Cunliffe and Jon Wikan. Ingrid Jenson joined us. The next day Scott Robinson did his own set and Pat O’Leary played bass. I met Pat as a 17 year old when he came to my little hometown with Lionel Hampton’s band. I was this little high school kid, going to this concert and hearing this bass player with this great big band. I asked him for his signature. Pat put his signature on an electric bass strap, something that you put around your shoulder to hold the bass in place. That is a souvenir because I got a lot of famous bass players on that: Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, John Clayton, who became one of my best friends and mentors, and Ray Brown. That’s not lying on my coffee table for everybody to see.

JJ: Do you have any memories of 9/11 you would share with us?

MW: We were living in Queens at that time and my wife was working in the city. I was in Germany teaching and performing with the National Youth Jazz Orchestra for a couple of weeks. I was giving a private lesson and one student dragged me out of the room, telling me what happened. For hours and hours I tried to get through to my wife because the whole phone system collapsed; it was so overwhelming. Fortunately she saw
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TALKING JAZZ/MARTIN WIND
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what happened and didn’t go into the city.

The flight back from Frankfort must have been one of the first flights into JFK because everything was deserted. It was a big 747, and there were maybe 30 to 50 people on it. It was really eerie. Those first weeks I remember going in on the subway, and there was this gray cloud hanging over everybody. You could tell how shaken everybody was.

JJ: How did you connect with Dena DeRose?

MW: The link between the two of us is Matt Wilson. Matt had been playing with her for many years. Matt and I started playing trio with Bill Mays. He just thought I would be a good match with Dena’s music. I love Dena anyway. She is like my sister. She stays at our house when she is here. One thing I always look forward to is you just never know what is going to happen on the bandstand. She is completely unpredictable. She might mess with the tempo, might want to slow things down, or take things out of tempo completely. I love that kind of flexibility, really being in the moment and not being afraid to do these adjustments.

The first gig I did with her was at the Harrisburg Festival. I was really excited to be playing with Matt and Dena. On the way to the gig I had a flat tire. The bottom line is they had to start without me. Steve LaSpina played the first tune or so, and I had this great entrance walking into this big ballroom at the Hilton with my bass, walking right up onto the stage thanking Steve and taking over. It was quite an entrance. [Laughs] Obviously I had notified them. The first studio album, A Walk in the Park, I still love so much. It is a masterpiece. I’m proud to still be associated with her and we have stuff coming up again.

JJ: How did you meet and start playing with Matt Wilson and Bill Mays?

MW: The first time was at the Silvertine Tavern in Connecticut. It was a concert with Carla White, a singer we lost quite a few years ago. When I put together my first recording session after moving here, it resulted in the Family album. I wanted Matt to be on it. That recording session was the birth of the Bill Mays Trio. That was when we played together for the first time. Matt started using me more and more for his own groups and recommended me to Dena. We developed a very close friendship that goes well past the music part. We’ve traveled so many countries together; we both love exploring and meeting people. He is by far the most influential musician I’ve met since moving to the United States. I don’t think anybody has had more of an impact on my life, my development as a musician and as a person.

We did a recording in October called The Carl Sandburg Project. Matt got a grant from Chamber Music America to write music to some of Carl Sandburg’s poems. Carl Sandburg is from the same area in Illinois and there are some family ties between Matt’s family and Carl Sandburg’s family, so there is a direct connection. We recorded with a new band: Jeff Lederer, Ron Miles playing cornet, Dawn Thomson playing guitar and singing, Matt and myself. He recruited some jazz people to read the poems: Joe Lovano, John Scofield, Bill Frisell, Christian McBride, Rufus Reid and Jack Black, the actor. I think that is going to be released in early fall, and is going to freak people out. It is so different. I play acoustic bass guitar on the whole album. That was a suggestion of Matt’s after he played with Steve Swallow. He thought that would be a great sound for that music, and we really got into it. It was a lot of fun.

Bill Mays was partially responsible for me coming to the United States. We met in Europe in ’92 or ’93. He heard me play at the North Sea Jazz Festival. We actually did not meet, but he heard me. That same year he was asked to play a tour in Germany and he requested me on the tour. That is how we met. After that we started doing trio concerts in Germany and he would send me lists and lists of tunes he wanted me to learn. He really kicked my butt and was a mentor and a huge influence. Through him, I met my wife. I don’t know where I would be without him. He has been very instrumental in my career and on so many different levels.

JJ: Is there a film, book or play you feel will give us non-musicians an accurate idea of what a musician’s life is like?

MW: It is certainly not La La Land. I think Round Midnight was a pretty powerful movie. I think Dexter Gordon did a pretty good job. He pretty much played himself and didn’t have to act.

JJ: Final question: what made you decide to stay in the US?

MW: Several reasons. After my first year, I was only a few credits short of my Masters, and I figured I might as well get my degree. Also, things were happening for me, and I wanted to see how far I could make it in the city. The two main reasons were personal; I met my wife and by the time I finished my first two semesters, my wife was pregnant. Life took over, I went for the ride, and everything worked out beautifully.

JJ: That is a good note to end on. Thanks so much for doing this it was a lot of fun for me.

MW: Oh you are welcome. Have a great weekend.

If you’d like to get Martin’s newsletter, just sign up for it at his website or become a Facebook friend.

Schaein Fox is a longtime jazz fan. Now retired, he devotes much of his time to the music and shares his encounters with musicians in this column.
**DISCOVER THE WORLD WITH JAZZDAGEN TOURS**

**JAZZ ALIVE 2017**
JUNE 9 - 19, 2017

10 day cruise from Los Angeles to Vancouver on the Crystal Serenity

Visit Los Angeles, Sanata Barbara, San Francisco, Astoria, Seattle, Victoria and Vancouver.

Travel with: Antti Sarpila, Warren Vache, Harry Allen, Jacob Fischer, Ulf Johansson, Eddie Metz, Bill Allred, Danny Coots, Tom Hook, Rebecca Kilgore, Jason Warner, Kristin Korb, Richard Simon, Butch Miles, Pieter Meijers, Titan Hot Seven and more

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**CELEBRATE NEW YEARS WITH JAZZDAGEN**

**PANAMA CANAL**
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Visit Ft. Lauderdale, Private Island: Half Moon Cay, Aruba, Curacao, Cartagena/Colombia, Lake Gatun/Panama Canal, Colon/Panama, Puerto Limon/Costa Rica.

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UNITED WE SWING!

Essentially Ellington Festival showcases top U.S. high school jazz musicians ... and pitches for school arts funding

At a time when a new administration in Washington has proposed to eliminate public funding for the NEA, this year’s Essentially Ellington Festival at Lincoln Center kicked off with a N’Orleans-style Second Line parade to beat the drum for support for the arts.

The event began with brief remarks from Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Vice President of Education Todd Stoll, before the parade was kicked off with a trumpet call. JALC Orchestra musicians and students then proceeded to play “Joe Avery’s Blues” in a parade from Columbus Circle Park to the Jazz at Lincoln Center marquee.

The parade, while honoring the students and band directors competing in the 22nd annual Essentially Ellington Competition & Festival, also sought to showcase how arts education programs empower young people to learn, create and play. Amidst proposed cuts to arts programs nationwide, the Second Line demonstrated both the importance of preserving the arts as well as the need to protect the next generation’s access to arts education, organizers said.

“Decisions are made by the community. If a community can understand the value of knowing who we are and coming to a collective understanding and general wisdom, then great arts will happen,” said Wynton Marsalis, Managing and Artistic Director for Jazz at Lincoln Center. “[The budget] is already too small, we shouldn’t be thinking about cutting it, we should be thinking about growing it.”

RETURNING WINNER, TUCSON JAZZ INSTITUTE, TAKES HOME FIRST PLACE HONORS, FOR THE THIRD TIME

Over the next three days more than 400 top-flight young jazz players from around the country underscored Marsalis’s point with a spirited three-part musical competition and a final concert and awards ceremony at JALC’s Frederick P. Rose Hall.

The 1st-place winner was Tucson Jazz Institute from Tucson, AZ. This is the third time TJI has taken 1st-place honors including 2013 and 2014. The 2nd-place winner was Denver School of the Arts from Denver, CO and 3rd-place winner was Dillard Center for the Arts from Fort Lauderdale, FL. In addition, Newark Academy from Livingston, NJ received an honorable mention.

Beginning on May 11, the top 15 high school jazz bands in the country participated in the competition and for the first time ever, Essentially Ellington welcomed guests from the Orquesta Juvenil de Jazz de Cuba to perform in exhibition. Their performance expands JALC’s outreach to the educational system in Havana. All 16 bands were immersed in three days of mentoring, jam sessions and workshops.

Saturday evening the competition culminated with each top-placing band performing alongside their choice of JALC guest soloist. The final concert also featured the world-renowned orchestra, whose members served as mentors for the finalist bands throughout the festival, led by Wynton Marsalis. The Orchestra performed the music of Chick Webb and Duke Ellington that will be featured in next year’s Essentially Ellington program.

Each finalist band was selected by a panel that included Loren Schoenberg, Mark Buselli, Steve Fidyk and Todd Coolman. At the Festival, finalist bands were critiqued by a panel of judges comprised of distinguished jazz musicians and historians: Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Managing and Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis; acclaimed trumpeter and Artistic Director of the Pittsburgh and Cleveland Jazz Orchestras Sean Jones; big band leader, drummer and Grammy-nominated recording artist Jeff Hamilton; renowned flautist, saxophonist, composer, educator, and EE Alum Erica von Kleist; and Director Emeritus of Jazz Studies, Houston’s High School for Performing and Visual Arts, Dr. Bob Morgan.

Marsalis presented awards to each finalist. Tucson Jazz Institute received the 1st-place trophy and a $5,000 award. Denver School of the Arts received the 2nd-place trophy and a $2,500 award. Dillard Center for the Arts received the 3rd-place trophy and a $1,000 award. The remaining finalists received a prize of $500. Monetary awards will support the jazz education programs of each of the festival high schools.
Newark Academy Movin’ On Up at Essentially Ellington

The Newark Academy’s Chameleon is one of New Jersey’s top high school jazz bands. The Livingston school is the reigning New Jersey Association for Jazz Education Festival Division III winner, a spot they’ve held for eight years in a row. They’re also one of the top outfits nationally, as witnessed by their strong showing (11 group and individual awards) last month at the prestigious Essentially Ellington competition at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Jersey Jazz’s Sanford Josephson caught up with Newark Academy’s jazz director Julius Tolentino for a brief email interview just after the band received its Honorary Mention award at JALC.

SJ: How many years has the band been a finalist?
JT: This is the third year Newark Academy has made Essentially Ellington. We also made it in 2012 and 2015. We have been applying every year for the festival since 2009.

SJ: How do you feel about receiving Honorable Mention this year?
JT: The students and I were very happy about coming in fourth in the nation this year. It’s the best our group has placed, and the top three bands this year were either performing arts high schools or all-star high school bands. We are by far the smallest school participating, so this speaks volumes about the work we are doing at Newark Academy. We also received two section awards and eight soloist awards as well.

SJ: How are you able to maintain this level of excellence year to year?
JT: I think there are three main reasons we can maintain a high level from year to year. First, to get a band to Ellington consistently you have to build a culture around listening to the music, which our students do because they love it, not because they have to. Second is the ability to identify talent at a middle school level and expose them early. Our student body is a little more than 550 students from 6th to 12th grade, so we don’t have a large pool of students to pull from, instead we get them exposed to jazz at an early age. We have two auditioned big bands, and the second band can be a place for that young talent to get the training to be in our top group. The third factor is when something is successful, everyone wants to be a part of it. Our group has been recognized nationally for their playing and it has come in 1st place at NIAJE States for eight years in a row. There is a lot of pride in that, which transfers to a tradition of hard work. In comparison to other top programs, we don’t have that much rehearsal time, but we make up for that with very focused rehearsals and lots of individual work.

SJ: Are any of your band members planning to go on to pursue jazz studies at the college level?
JT: We have had a handful of students go into music and jazz studies, and most that do, end up as a double major. I’ve seen almost all of my students in the top band continue to play jazz in or outside of their college experience.

SJ: Anything else you’d like to add?
JT: Wynton Marsalis and the staff at JALC are providing such an experience for all the communities that make it into the festival, and are also providing free music to thousands of schools each year. This festival has been a program changer for Newark Academy and I would encourage more directors to take advantage of these resources. Newark Academy also hosts a non-competitive Regional Essentially Ellington Festival in late April each year, which gives an opportunity for high school bands to perform Duke Ellington’s music and take part in several clinics and workshops all about jazz.

Another effort to encourage and teach other communities about jazz music is our Newark Academy Summer Jazz Workshop. It’s a two-week program, that has an amazing staff with world class musicians. As the jazz director at Newark Academy, I want to show my students that jazz music is about community and not competition, so I try to lead by example with sharing what we do at NA to anyone that is interested.

Newark Academy, founded in 1774, is the second-oldest independent day school in New Jersey with 550 students from 6th to 12th grade. Its jazz big band, “Chameleon,” is one of a dozen instrumental groups and one of two select jazz bands. The band has been involved in state and national competitions, placing 1st in the New Jersey state jazz band competition the last eight years. Both combo and big band have also been finalists in the Mingus Competition, the big band coming in first in 2014 and 2015. Members of the big band are also involved in auditioned groups such as Jazz House Kids, Jazz for Teens, Jazz Regions, Jazz All States, Next Generation Jazz Orchestra and the Grammy Session Band.
The Ocean County College Jazz Band

This hidden gem swings and inspires with a contagious spirit

By Sanford Josephson

When he was 16 years old, growing up in Ocean Township, NJ, Dave Marowitz first heard the Buddy Rich album, *Swingin’ New Big Band* (Pacific Jazz; 1966). “I flipped,” he recalled. “I knew this was the kind of music that I wanted to pursue.”

While in college at Elon University in Elon, NC, Marowitz met music publisher Charles Colin who provided him with contact information for Lloyd Michels, then Rich’s lead trumpet player. Marowitz sent Michels his arrangement of the Barry Mann/Cynthia Weil song “On Broadway,” a hit for the Drifters in 1963. His arrangement was recorded by the band on the Rich album, *Big Band Machine* (Groove Merchant: 1975). “Lloyd said that Buddy liked the chart and wanted me to write more for the band,” he recalled, “and so, I did. My arrangement of ‘So What’ (Miles Davis) was also recorded by his band.”

Marowitz played trombone with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra and Jay and the Americans, among other gigs, before embarking on a 36-year career as an educator, beginning at Neptune Junior High School in 1977 and culminating with his retirement from the Hooper Elementary School in Toms River, where he taught instrumental music and was voted by his peers as “Teacher of the Year” during his last year in 2013.

During that final year at Hooper, he began teaching world music at Ocean County College, also in Toms River, and the following year added jazz history to his course load. “In the spring of 2014,” he said, “we offered a course called ‘beginning jazz theory and improvisation’; it was on the books but never happened.” But since eight students registered, Marowitz decided to form a jazz band at the school.

The Ocean County Jazz Band is now in its fourth year, and, based on the performance I saw on April 19 at One Flight Up in downtown Toms River, it has a bright future. Propelled by the energetic drumming of Brianne Stendardo, a future music therapy student at Montclair State, the 13-piece band played Marowitz’s crisp arrangements of tunes ranging from Paul McCartney’s “Get Back” to Herbie Mann’s “Memphis Underground” to the Gershwin standard, “I’ve Got a Crush on You,” featuring a Sinatra-like vocal by Tyler Ricker. The finale, “Jumpin Jack,” written by Big Bad Voodoo Daddy guitarist/vocalist Scotty Morris, blew the roof off. (Could “Sing Sing Sing” be next up?)

What is special about this band is not just its musicianship but the spirit and camaraderie of the members. Many of the OCC jazz band members probably won’t go on to music careers. But it is clear they are dedicated to making the band swing, and their visible support for each other was exciting and inspiring. “The way I see it,” baritone saxophonist Emily Boyer told me, “our band is not just a band. We’ve created an immensely strong bond.” Trombonist Jonathan Episcopo believes, “there is something special about the OCC jazz band. We can have fun while also sounding professional.”

For “Jumpin’ Jacks,” Boyer switched from baritone to clarinet. She started playing clarinet in Point Pleasant Boro when she was nine years old. “In my senior year of high school,” she said, “I was finally able to join the jazz band, as a school saxophone was available to me, and the instrument was the baritone saxophone. The baritone saxophone has always sparked my interest. The lower instruments — bassoon, bass clarinet, cello, baritone saxophone — are so rich in color and important to any piece. Without these supporting instruments, the melody wouldn’t be interesting to listen to.”
Switching between clarinet and saxophone, she added, "is the easiest transition between two instruments. The only differences are some of the fingerings and the weight of the baritone saxophone, which can be quickly adapted to." Boyer hopes to major in music education and possibly minor or double-major in performance when she graduates from OCC.

Episcopo, along with the band’s keyboardist, Diana McEntee, is planning to major in jazz studies and composition at Rowan University. The jazz program at Rowan is directed by baritone saxophonist Denis DiBlassio, onetime musical director of the Maynard Ferguson Band and current executive director of the Rowan-based Maynard Ferguson Institute of Jazz Studies. Episcopo, who is from Tuckerton, NJ, credits Marowitz for inspiring him to follow a career in jazz. "My interest in jazz flourished during my first year attending Ocean County College," he said, "when I took a jazz history course with Professor Marowitz. Before enrolling in that course, I had performed in the jazz ensemble at my high school (Pinelands Regional) but had never seriously considered jazz as a career or even listening to jazz full-time. After completing Professor Marowitz’s jazz history course, I became interested in several styles of jazz, and I decided to attend a jam session that the OCC Jazz Band was holding; later I became a full-time member of the group. After performing with the group for a semester, I enrolled in Professor Marowitz’s jazz improvisation course (now part of the curriculum), and I spent a semester working with him on developing my solos using various techniques."

In elementary school, Episcopo’s first instrument was the tuba. "It was like the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears," he recalled. "My teacher placed a tuba in my hands, and it was way too big for me. We then tried the trumpet, which I found to be too small. Finally, the trombone, which fit just right. I have always loved the versatility of the trombone. It can produce dark overtones and bright and exciting melodies. Also, it’s just plain fun to use the slide and place glissandos in melodies." Episcopo’s main influence on trombone is jazz funk player Fred Wesley, best known for his work with James Brown, but who also played with Count Basie and Lionel Hampton.

"I owe my love of jazz funk to him," Episcopo said. "As a trombone player, I try to emulate the funky licks that he blows, as well as the rounded, full tones that he produces."

Boyer loves listening to baritone saxophonist Leo P’s recordings with the band, Lucky Chops, although "he may be a completely different style than I play." She credits this writer with exposing her to Gerry Mulligan. "I’ve actually been fascinated by Gerry Mulligan since you gave a presentation at OCC last fall. His playing is so mellow."

Trumpeter Brandon Cooper has been playing his instrument since elementary school and was part of the jazz band at Toms River High School East, but, like Episcopo, his jazz knowledge and appreciation blossomed after attending Marowitz’s jazz history class. "My tone is as mellow as Miles Davis," he said, "but people tell me I have the potential to be able to play like Maynard Ferguson." Other trumpet players who have influenced him, he added, are Doc Severinsen and Arturo Sandoval.

After the One Flight Up performance, the OCC Jazz Band played on May 2 at the Ocean County Library in Toms River. On May 19, their performance at the Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts on the OCC campus also included the recording of a CD. And their final spring performance was at the New Jersey State Chili & Salsa Cookoff on May 20 in downtown Toms River.

As most New Jersey Jazz Society members know, many live jazz performances in the state are populated by older audiences. So the natural question to ask these young musicians was: ‘What will it take to consistently attract a younger audience to jazz?’ ‘In order for jazz to be popular with young people,’ Boyer said, ‘the music needs to be as captivating as the typical music they listen to. Possibly mixing modern elements into jazz will help open the door to this beautiful music. Though, once one knows jazz, you’ll come to appreciate all types of the genre.’

Episcopo believes, ‘One of the common misconceptions about jazz to my generation is that people believe it is confined to just the slow and melodic old time feel jazz of the ’50s. I have found that people who listen to jazz funk musicians such as Herbie Hancock or Lettuce don’t realize these are jazz musicians. The key to getting my generation interested in jazz is to be exposed to it. There are so many sub genres of jazz … you may not like one style of jazz, but there will always be a genre that someone will like.’ Cooper agrees. ‘I believe the only way to get young people to appreciate jazz more is to get them exposed to it more,’ he said. ‘There’s a difference between exposing someone to something new and forcing them to experience it. I think if there was some way to be able get more of a word out that local jazz groups are out and performing, more people would take an interest in it.’

Marowitz, justifiably, takes pride in the development of the OCC Jazz Band. What he particularly likes is that, ‘They just have fun playing together and don’t hide it. They joke around with one another while in performance without missing a note. Audiences enjoy seeing them having so much fun, and so do I.’
This month’s Noteworthy offering is a chapter from my English adaptation of Timme Rosenkrantz’s and my Harlem Jazz Adventures: A European Baron’s Memoir, 1934-1969. Dan Morgenstern knew Timme decades before the “jazz baron” befriended me here in Greater Copenhagen. Dan wrote the book’s introduction. There’s a video of the adapter reading another chapter to “walking bass” accompaniment at the book’s website, www.jazzbaron.com. Check it out!

Who Said Danish Baron? Why, He’s Just a Gigolo!

CAMÉE THE DAY for me to meet Benny Goodman, John Hammond, Goodman’s mentor and close friend, offered to introduce me to “The King of Swing.”

I went along with John to a rehearsal in the entertainment mogul Billy Rose’s Music Hall. I was already a big admirer of Goodman, whom I knew from recordings with Ben Pollack, Red Nichols, and others, and my expectations were high. Benny was eager and expectant, too, not because he was going to meet me, but because he’d be debuting at the establishment’s plush Casino de Paree a few days later, with his twelve-piece orchestra. This was the recently formed (in the spring of 1934) and soon to be wildly popular “Let’s Dance” swing band of Columbia Records and radio broadcast fame.

Benjamin David Goodman was a master clarinetist and top white bandleader of the swing era. The son of a poor Jewish family in Chicago, he worked professionally from the age of thirteen. Goodman was one of the first leaders to feature black musicians. The pianist Teddy Wilson began his long association with John Hammond and Goodman around 1931, when Benny worked in Broadway shows and recording studios. Teddy later joined Benny’s band, marking the first hiring of a black instrumentalist in a leading swing orchestra.

Goodman discovered the great vibraphonist and drummer Lionel Hampton and brought him to New York to play in his quartet, along with Teddy Wilson. Ella Fitzgerald, “the first lady of song,” recorded with him. Billie Holiday made her first record, Your Mother’s Son-in-Law, on Columbia, with Goodman. Benny Carter was an arranger for that first band, and Goodman played tenor sax on Carter’s charts, which called for four saxophones. Not many people know that Goodman was a master of the whole reed family.

Benny Goodman was an uncompromising perfectionist who always expected the best from his musicians, his flawless, easy-flowing style on Tilt clarinet set new standards for perfection. I had pictured him as a real gone cat, and at first sight, I remember feeling a bit let down. He was not a tall man, but standing ramrod straight, and wearing rimless glasses and a neutral expression, he reminded me of a Sunday school teacher from the Danish provincial town of Viborg. What came out of that clarinet, however, was sheer joy. So I was delighted to meet the man who had made “Shirt Tail Stomp.”

Benny was very kind. He turned on a warm smile of greeting. Not a man of many words, he did say a few flattering things about Denmark, which he knew was somewhere in Norway, with Stockholm as its capital. Then he went back to a Benny Carter arrangement that he and the band were rehearsing.

This was the first time I had heard a big white jazz band in person, and their precision and dynamics were something. Benny was a bottomless improviser with a matchless technique, and there was lots of room for his clarinet solos. The clarinet could ride like no other instrument over a bunch of horns and a rhythm section, which is one reason why several clarinetists (Artie Shaw, Woody Herman, Jerry Wald, Jimmy Dorsey come to mind) rose to become bandleaders in the swing era.

This band was so new that they’d rehearsed only a few times, but it sounded like the guys had been playing together for years. (In fact, Benny often changed his sidemen, especially when he felt someone wasn’t giving his all.) The pianist, Frankie Froeba, I knew from records, but all the others were brand-new to me. Some of those were Pee Wee Erwin on trumpet, Toots Mondello on alto sax, Arthur Rollini (the multi-instrumentalist Adrian Rollini’s kid brother) on tenor sax, the great guitarist George Van Eps, and the drummer Sam Weiss. Helen Ward was the band’s vocalist, and she stayed with Benny for a long time.

Looking about at the plush surroundings in the hall’s Casino de Straw hat in hand, young Baron Timme Rosenkrantz is about to disembark from a Danish steamship at the Port of New York, in February 1934.

Continued on page 30
in a benefit concert for I M A G I N E, A Center for Coping with Loss

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Congratulations, Leonieke Scheuble, on winning the 2017 International Women in Jazz “youth in action” award.

Hear her as she opens this show with solo piano beginning at 3:30pm.
Paree, I wondered how a poor, jazz-struck Dane like me could ever get into this ritzy restaurant and catch the Goodman band on opening night. One thing I did know: I had to hear them live again — and again.

That was when the idea hit me. I remembered seeing an ad in the paper that Billy Rose was looking for gigolos — clean-cut, good-looking young men, from decent homes, to dance with the wives of tired businessmen while they enjoyed their after-dinner coffee and cigars, or counted their money.

Maybe there was a chance. But was I handsome enough? My guess was no. The advertisement seemed to call for nothing less than a Greek god. Looking in the minor, I confronted something more like Orpheus in the Underworld. But that didn’t stop me.

Next day I turned up at Billy Rose’s Music Hall and was shown into the big-little man’s private office. Introducing myself, I plunked my calling card (as big as his Playbill) on his desk. The card bore my name, title, and baronial crest with lion’s feet the sire of Columbus Circle.

Rose looked at it dubiously — but that was the same way he eyed some of the gum-chomping Creek gods who danced attendance on him. He thought awhile, parked his own wad of gum on a thousand-dollar bill, and said, "All right, Timme, if you can prove that you’re really a baron, I’ll try to forget your looks. Then the job’s yours. But tell me, can you dance?"

A sharp question, but I had an answer ready. I assured him I was a dancing fool. I said I had studied ballroom dancing with Master Carsten in Copenhagen. This seemed to impress him.

Next day I dashed downtown to the Danish Consulate and talked a young and unsuspecting vice consul into signing a testimonial that my blood was true blue.

"This is to certify that the bearer, Baron Timme Rosenkrantz, belongs to one of the best known and oldest families of the Danish nobility. (Signed) Helmuth Møller, Acting Consul-General."

That did it. As The New York Times reported, I became “the first European to be engaged as a gigolo at the Casino de Paree.”

On the band’s opening night, I started as a “refined” male dancing partner at Billy Rose’s Music Hall. Every night for a month, I danced to the wonderful music of Benny Goodman and His Music Hall Orchestra, and was even paid to do it! I wrote a series of articles for a big Copenhagen newspaper, describing my experiences. That brought a little extra income. Let’s not forget, either, that I made Walter Winchell’s “On Broadway” gossip column in the New York Daily Mirror:

Such trivia as those press-agented releases concerning members of the nobility being reduced to commoners in New York — usually find repose in our wicker (basket)... But the story of Baron Rosenkranz (sic) is on the up-and-up... The Baron is now a gigolo at the Casino de Paree at $20 per week... The management there demanded proof that he was a nobleman... The local Danish Consul supplied the credentials, which revealed that his family dated back centuries, and were out of the top-drawer.

The sole personal disappointment in this saga was Benny Goodman’s reaction when he saw me out there on the dance floor in a white gigolo’s uniform, replete with white carnation in my buttonhole, whirling some elderly chick around the floor. He didn’t want to know me any more. And it has been that way ever since.

Sammy Weiss, the drummer, told me later that Benny pointed me out to him and said, “Can you beat that fraud? I thought he was a real baron from Denmark, and he turns out to be just a gigolo!”


Fran Kaufman photographs the world of jazz — on stage and behind the scenes.

See what’s happening—with a new photo every day—on the WBGO Photoblog.

Check out where Fran’s hanging, and see what she sees, at www.wbgo.org/photoblog
Gallery Reception at WBGO
The Art of Jazz: Performing Artists as Visual Artists

The public is invited to a free gallery reception on Thursday, June 8, 6 - 8 pm at the WBGO Art Gallery. View the exhibit, meet the artists and enjoy a live performance. This exhibit is curated by Jersey Jazz contributing photographer Tony Graves and WBGO host Sheila Anderson. It includes paintings and photographs by jazz musicians, including: Tony Bennett, Don Braden, Will Calhoun, Gerald Cannon, Mino Cinelu, Honi Gordon, Dick Griffon, Olive Lake, Peter Leitch, Carmen Lundy, Perez, Bucky Pizzarelli, Judy Silvano and Sonelius Smith.

The WBGO Gallery is located at 54 Park Place in Newark, NJ. It’s free and open to the public. WBGO is a wheelchair accessible facility. You can also visit the WBGO gallery during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM. This Gallery reception is sponsored by Wines of South Africa.

October 22, 2017
SAVE THE DATE!

For the New Jersey Jazz Society’s 45th Anniversary Celebration!
DOROTHY YOUNG CENTER FOR THE ARTS
Drew University, Madison, New Jersey

Celebrating the rich jazz history of New Jersey, from big bands to bebop, and honoring the 75-year career of the Garden State’s own beloved jazz guitarist, Bucky Pizzarelli. We are seeking sponsors and supporters for this gala event; for more information please email Cydney at chalpin@earthlink.net.
RHYTHM & RHYME

Poetry editor Gloria Krolak explores the world of jazz in verse. This month’s selection is an unflinching portrait of the infamous Chet Baker.

RICHARD ELMAN

At the University of Arizona Poetry Center’s online Audio Video Library*, you can listen to poets reading their work, chatting with their audiences, and lending another dimension to what they’ve memorialized on paper. For poets who have died, as Richard Elman did in 1997, this is especially valuable. One hears the seriousness behind the humor and the urgency to communicate the social injustices he observed in Brooklyn-accented English. In 1987 he spoke for 40 minutes reading as yet unpublished works because, as he explained, you have the library for those already in publication, of which there has been much. In addition to poetry, Elman wrote novels, short stories, reviews, memoirs and essays, sometimes under pseudonyms to avoid sounding like himself. He was a journalist in Central America and based many stories in war-torn Nicaragua. In addition, he had been a radio commentator on NPR’s All Things Considered and an educator.

The son of Yiddish-speaking immigrants from Russo-Poland, Elman grew up in Crown Heights, a predominantly Jewish neighborhood in the 1930s, and the inspiration for much of his fiction. He graduated from Syracuse University in 1955 and earned his master’s degree at Stanford University. His memoir, Namedropping, in which he writes about the famous people he’s encountered, was published the year after his death. This year his wife, Alice Goode-Elman, edited and published The Complete Poems of Richard Elman 1955-1997, bringing together published works and some of his best poems that he said were “scattered in magazines and newspapers and the drawers of my desk.”

CHET BAKER

Time and biographers have not been kind to Chet Baker, the talented, popular trumpeter and vocalist who began his career in the 1950s. He seems better known now for the gifts he wasted on heroin, cocaine, speedballs and hard liquor, the stereotypical jazz junkie. In a review of James Gavin’s 2002 book, Deep in a Dream: The Long Night of Chet Baker, Jeffrey St. Clair could not bring himself to call Baker’s life tragic. Instead he used the word “repellent,” a man who used and hurt everyone who came near, including his many girlfriends, wives and children. He was the ultimate nihilist and, by 1958, overtaken by his need to get high.

He went from James Dean like good looks in his youth to a craggy and broken old man of only 58 at his death, his face and body destroyed not only by his destructive habits, but the beating he took from drug dealers in 1966 which knocked out his teeth. It was years before he could play again. Where his fate was written can be the move to California where Baker took up the trumpet, and after two stints in the Army, one with the Sixth Army Band in San Francisco — one can only imagine him playing taps at nightfall — and gigs with Charlie Parker, Stan Getz and Gerry Mulligan.

He was criticized by his peers for his lack of technique and innovation. And yet, his touching way with a song was and still is appealing, especially for those who intuit a wing-damaged bird, a hungry child, and a sensual being rolled into one. Two movies have been made about Baker. Born to Be Blue starring Ethan Hawke is said to be “semi-factual.” The second, Let’s Get Lost, is a fascinating documentary by Bruce Weber with Chet and friends. Richard Elman’s poem was written after he and his wife Alice caught Baker at a Village club in the 1980s. Baker died in 1988 after a fall from a hotel window in Amsterdam.

* voca.arizona.edu

CHET’S JAZZ

By Richard Elman

The jamming together of fragments puffed through a failing wind reiterates such sounds as can extenuate the hurt lips on the caved-in face.
“If you could see me now.”
sings the ghost of pretty boy Chet, faintly flirtatious, and when he blows again he goes up and down on his tip toes as if reaching for distortions that are the ghosts of melodies he started 20 years ago with Gerry Mulligan.
Strange feedback now to spook his old sidekick with these noises which announce they were never there in the first place, and then to declare, “that’s one we call Broken Wing.”
The titles tell one story of a talent broken, strung out, in jail more times than he has notes left in his mouthpiece, but the tunes aren’t grim. Behind Chet’s clerical specs a death’s head blows frivolous trills on a brass horn, blue notes so oblique his group can only vamp and vamp and vamp again a rhythm like applause.
Chet’s got it tonight. He’s on!
Even his sweetest clinkers encourage us to believe in inspired errors.

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For the past few years, vocalist Marcus Goldhaber has performed a series of shows at various venues around New York City that he calls Mostly Marcus. He begins each show performing an extended series of selections, usually accompanied by a pianist and bassist, but then he has a guest vocalist join him later in the show.

For his show at the Laurie Beechman Theater on April 2, he was accompanied by Michael Kanan on piano and Paul Gill on bass. His vocal guest was Melissa Stylianou. The program was devoted to songs from 1944.

Goldhaber has a pleasant and flexible baritone voice, a fine sense of swing, and a ready wit that comes across in his between song comments.

Among the tunes that he addressed in the opening part of his show were standards like “Swinging on a Star,” “Like Someone in Love,” “Nancy With the Laughing Face,” “I Didn’t Sleep a Wink Last Night” and “GI Jive.”

Stylianou arrived on the scene to join Goldhaber for “People Will Say We’re in Love.” They had nice chemistry in their performance, and that continued on other tunes such as “Walkin’ My Baby Back Home,” and a catchy Goldhaber original, “Let’s Be foolish Together.

This all made for a pleasant hour and a half of musical entertainment. Both singers sounded wonderful, and Kanan and Gill provided the kind of musical bed that vocalists treasure.

You can find out about future performances of Mostly Marcus at www.marcusgoldhaber.com.

MARCUS GOLDHABER:
Mostly Marcus – Songs of 1944
Laurie Beechman Theater, NYC
April 2

MICHAEL FEINSTEIN:
The Unforgettable Nat “King” Cole
The Appel Room, Jazz at Lincoln Center, NYC | April 5-6

For this season, Michael Feinstein, Director of the Jazz & Popular Song series, is paying tribute to three of the finest vocalists ever to grace the jazz scene, Nat “King” Cole, Mel Tormé and Ella Fitzgerald.

The first concert in this series was dedicated to the legacy of Cole. Joining Feinstein, who hosted the evening, and performed several vocals, were vocalists Loston Harris, Denzil Sinclaire and Carol Woods, backed by the Tedd Firth Big Band.

Feinestein kicked the music off with a medley of “L-O-V-E” and “Almost Like Being in Love,” followed by a tender “Mona Lisa” supported solely by the guitar of Pete Smith.

Harris, who is also a fine pianist, took the piano chair to sing “Just You, Just Me” with some nice solo work by Andy Farber on alto sax and Warren Vaché on cornet. He then sweetly caressed “Sweet Lorraine.”

Woods, who recently released an album of songs by Richard Whiting, chose to sing two selections from the album that were also recorded by Cole, “Breezin’ Along With the Breeze” and “She’s Funny That Way.”
Sinclair was the closest to Cole in his sound. He performed “When I Fall in Love,” “Dance, Ballerina, Dance” and one of the more off-beat Cole chart hits, “The Ruby and the Pearl.”

Feinstein returned to give his take on “St. Louis Blues” and performed a duet with Woods on “Unforgettable.” Feinstein took a seat at the piano and accompanied himself on the next two selections. The first was a true rarity, “It’s Just About That Time Again,” the closing theme from Cole’s too short-lived television show. Then he sang a sensitive “The Very Thought of You.”

The band then joined in again for a medley of “Straighten Up and Fly Right,” “Walkin’ My Baby Back Home” and “Let There Be Love.” To close the evening, all parties joined in on “Route 66.”

This was a fitting tribute to a giant from the world of pop/jazz vocalizing. Each of the vocalists brought an individual style and sound to their performances, catching the spirit of Cole, but none in any way channeling him. Harris did mention how much he admired Cole’s piano artistry, and that it did have an influence on his playing.

Special mention must be made of the magnificent big band that was assembled by Firth. They were tight, and full of talented soloists who took full advantage of the spaces left for them in Firth’s swinging arrangements.

Feinstein has placed the bar at a high level, but it is expected that the Tormé shows that will have taken place on May 3 and 4, and the Fitzgerald concerts, which will happen on June 7 and 8, will be equally well conceived.

Tickets for the June shows are available at www.jazz.org.

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA
Celebrating Ella: The First Lady of Jazz

Frederick P. Rose Hall, NYC April 27-29

This being the centennial year of the birth of Ella Fitzgerald, there will be many ways in which this milestone will be celebrated. As it has in celebrating past centennials of jazz greats, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra did an exceptional job of honoring Fitzgerald with Celebrating Ella: The First Lady of Jazz.

Ella Fitzgerald was a singular performer. She was not a trained musician, but her innate musical instincts and talent enabled her to become a figure who garnered admiration that was not limited to jazz enthusiasts and her peers. She could take material that ranged from the Great American Songbook to jazz classics to pedestrian pop tunes, and stamp each of them with her unique talent, making them instant classics.

For a good illustration of how she could take an obscure tune, and turn it into an instant standard, consider the Cole Porter song, “Dream Dancing.” It was written for a film titled You’ll Never Get Rich, a 1941 vehicle starring Fred Astaire. The song was only used as an instrumental in the film, was soon recorded with a vocal by Astaire, and promptly faded away until, in 1972, Fitzgerald recorded it on an album for Atlantic, Ella Loves Cole. It was not until Pablo rereleased the album in 1978 under the title Dream Dancing, however, that the song started to attract attention. Over the years it has been picked up by many singers and jazz musicians, and is now a recognized standard.

For lovers of the Great American Songbook, the collection of composer songbooks recorded by Fitzgerald between 1956 and 1964 is essential listening.

For lovers of the Great American Songbook, the collection of composer songbooks recorded by Fitzgerald between 1956 and 1964 is essential listening.

Strayhorn for Fitzgerald’s Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook album. The concert began with the first two movements, “Royal Ancestry” and “All Heart.” They opened the second half of the program with the third movement, “Beyond Category,” and concluded the evening with the final movement, “Total Jazz.” This engaging music was artfully performed by the JALCO, and included the spoken prefaces that Ellington and Strayhorn wrote for each movement.

Both Gambarini and Washington are accurately classified as jazz vocalists. Each phrases with jazz sensitivity, is wonderfully creative with their scat interludes, and swing their forefathers.

Gambarini visited “I Hadn’t Anyone Till You” and “Lover Come Back to Me” in the opening set, and returned in the second to sing a dramatic “Lush Life,” and a tongue-twisting take on “Old MacDonald.”

Washington’s first half selections included “Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered” and a wordless scat vocal on “Cottontail.” The second half found him addressing “Too Close for Comfort” and “I’m Old Fashioned.” His scatting had the musicians grinning widely.

One of the highlights of Fitzgerald’s career was recording three duo albums with Louis Armstrong. To recall that collaboration, Gambarini and Washington paired up on “Almost Like Being in Love” and “They Can’t Take That Away From Me.” Lovano added his robust tenor playing to a half-dozen numbers during the concert. He was in fine form, swinging and tasteful. Particularly memorable was his two-tenor exchange with Walter Blanding during “Cottontail.”

The band was tight and in their finest swing mode. There were memorable solo interludes, too numerous to mention individually, throughout the program, with almost all of the sixteen musicians given solo space. The rhythm section of Dan Nimmer on piano, James Chirillo on guitar, Carlos Henriquez on bass and Ali Jackson laid down a steady rhythmic foundation all evening.

There will be many events celebrating the Ella Fitzgerald centennial, and this is sure to be numbered among the best.
Other Views

By Joe Lang
Past NJJS President

For a medium that is supposed to be on life support, albums released on CD keep coming my way, and I shall continue to recommend those that I believe will appeal to many of you. Tribute albums dedicated to a specific performer or songwriter have become an increasingly common theme for new releases, and you will find several of them in the discs reviewed in this column.

■ **Luck Be a Lady: A Tribute to Frank (BCM+D Records)** is a nine-song collection of tunes associated with Frank Sinatra, arranged by Mike Abene, and performed by the **TEMPLE UNIVERSITY STUDIO ORCHESTRA** with special guests trumpeter TERELL STAFFORD director of Jazz Studies at Temple, and alto saxophonist DICK OATTS. It is a wonderfully listenable program performed as a continuous suite. The selections are “It Was a Very Good Year,” “I’ll Never Smile Again,” “Fly Me to the Moon,” “Come Fly With Me,” “In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning,” “I Guess I’ll Hang My Tears Out to Dry,” “You Make Me Feel So Young,” “I’m a Fool to Want You” and “Luck Be a Lady.” The student orchestra, directed by Andreas Delfs, is polished and accomplished. Stafford and Oats are highly regarded instrumentalists who add their distinctive voices to Abene’s lush arrangements. The only shortcoming is that the disc is a mere 27 minutes long, but the music packed into this time frame is music that will whet your appetite for returning to the source material as recorded by the Voice himself. (CD Baby.com)

■ French alto saxophonist/clarinetist JEAN-FRANCOIS BONNEL was steeped in early jazz and the bebop of Charlie Parker when he discovered the alto saxophone artistry of Benny Carter. He soon became a student of Carter’s alto style, and Carter took a special place in Bonnel’s world of influences. With **Thanks to Benny Carter (Arbors – 19452)** is a direct result of Bonnel’s admiration for a session that Carter recorded with pianist Teddy Wilson and drummer Jo Jones in 1954. He’s used the same instrumentation for this album, with Chris Dawson on piano and Francois Laudet on drums. Vocalist Charmin Michelle is present on six of the ten tracks. There are five Carter compositions on the program, “When Lights Are Low,” “Tiltmouse,” “Blues in My Heart,” “Key Largo” and “Love, You’re Not the One for Me.” Two of the tunes are favorites of Carter, “If Dreams Come true” and “Cocktails for Two.” The other three are ones selected by Michelle, “Mood indigo,” “Lotus Blossom,” a tune by Arthur Johnson and Sam Coslow, not the more famous Billy Strayhorn song with the same title, and “‘Deed I Do.” Bonnel has, as stated in Ed Berger’s wonderfully informative liner notes, absorbed and given new life to the Carter alto sax sound and approach. Dawson is a perfect choice to fill the piano chair for Bonnel’s trio. Drummer Laudet come out of the classic swing tradition, keeping things moving without getting in the way. Michelle handles the vocalist role in a manner that will cause you to seek out her other recordings. Benny Carter was a true jazz giant, and Bonnel’s tribute to his genius is well conceived and executed. (arborsrecords.com)

■ The prodigious pianistic artistry of DICK HYMAN is on full display on **Solo at the Sacramento Jazz Festivals 1983-1988** (Arbors – 19451). Super fan Siegfried H. Mohr placed his recorder in the piano when Hyman played solo piano at the Sacramento Dixieland Jubilee Festival in the period from 1983-1988. From these recordings, Hyman has chosen 16 selections to include on this CD retrospective of his appearances at the event. Most of the numbers lean heavily on Hyman’s proficiency at playing in early jazz styles, with many of the compositions having been composed by James P. Johnson, Clarence Williams, Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton and Fats Waller. He also borrowed songs from the Great American Songbook like “‘S Wonderful,” “Sophisticated Lady,” “How High the Moon” and “All the Things You Are.” Particularly interesting are his readings of “Jazz Me Blues,” where he is inspired by Bix Beiderbecke’s cornet solo on his 1927 recording, the “Pilgrim’s Chorus” from Wagner’s Tannhauser, as it was interpreted by Donald Lambert, and Johnny Guarnieri’s “Virtuoso Rag,” a piece that Guarnieri dedicated to Hyman. Listening to Hyman is always exhilarating, and this disc should be an instant favorite for those who purchase it. (arborsrecords.com)

■ In the prior review, I referred to “the prodigious piano artistry of Dick Hyman,” and that description can also be applied to ROSSANO SPORTIELLO. **On Pastel** (Arbors – 19454), which could be subtitled “The Gentle Side of Rossano Sportiello.” He has chosen an eclectic program, that includes selections from classical music, the Great American Songbook, jazz, and a couple of originals to create 13 tracks of pure delight. He is particularly sagacious in pairing the likes of Grieg’s “Arietta op. 21” with “Like Someone in Love,” and Debussy’s “Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum” with “Lush Life.” Also special is his pairing of two gorgeous Johnny Mandel melodies, “A Time for Love” and “Close Enough for Love.” One of the distinctive aspects of Sportiello’s playing is his delicate, sensitive touch. He treats the keyboard like an extension of his body, and gives it the same kind of care and respect that he does for his own being. His composition, “Dedicated to George Shearing,” reflects his admiration for another jazz pianist who incorporated classical influences into his jazz excursions. Sportiello is among the front rank of jazz pianists, and this album gives ample proof of why that is the reality. (arborsrecords.com)

■ **Pathways** (Ocean Blue Tear Music – 0010) is the new release from...
the YOKO MIWA TRIO, a Boston-based group led by Miwa, who also is on staff at the Berklee College of Music. The trio, Miwa on piano, Will Slater on bass and Scott Goulding on drums, has been playing together for 15 years, and has developed the kind of instinctive empathy that results from this kind of familiarity. Although Slater has recently moved to New York City, his Boston replacement Brad Barrett has stepped in seamlessly, as is evident on the one track on which he fills the bass chair, “Dear Prudence.” There is constant energy on the eight tracks, whether they are playing one of Miwa’s four original pieces, Joni Mitchell’s “Court and Spark,” Lennon and McCartney’s “Dear Prudence .” There is constant energy on the kind of instinctive empathy that results from

The NEW ORLEANS SWAMP DONKEYS are a New Orleans-based band, fronted by trumpeter/vocalist James Williams, that comes from a trad jazz base, but who expand beyond that to incorporate many other influences. What they specialize in is fun music. They never forget that the primary function of any type of entertainment is to entertain their audience. Slightly Concussed: Live at De Melkus (self-produced) is a two-disc set that was recorded in 2015 and 2016 in the Netherlands. There are 20 selections including favorites like “Hello Dolly,” “Stardust,” “Struttin’ With Some Barbecue,” “Dinah” and “What a Wonderful World.” They gathered much attention from their take on the “Theme from Game of Thrones,” and that is one of the tunes on the album. The six-piece group includes trumpet, trombone, reeds, banjo, tuba and percussion. Williams is the primary center of attention with his exuberant trumpet work, and Louis Armstrong inspired vocals. These guys provide old time music with an occasional contemporary edge, and it all adds up to a lot of fun. (www.neworleansswampdonkeys.com)

■ Brothers Under the Sun (HighNote – 7294) is a tribute to the late pianist Mulgrew Miller by vibraphonist STEVE NELSON. The two were frequent musical partners who were born almost exactly one year apart, Nelson on August 11, 1954, and Miller on August 13, 1955. Besides sharing the same astrological sign, Leo, they shared a musical empathy that gave their joint efforts a special chemistry. To assist him in this nod to his friend and colleague, Nelson has chosen bassist Peter Washington and drummer Lewis Nash, both of whom had musical relationships with Miller and Nelson, as well as pianist Danny Grissett, stylistically a fine fit. The program consists of seven Miller originals, two standards that Miller recorded, “The More I See You” and “It Never Entered My Mind,” Nelson’s “Brothers Under the Sun,” and Grissett’s “Melody for Mulgrew.” The music reflects the kinship that all participants felt toward Miller. It is rendered with enthusiasm, technical refinement and exciting imagination. Miller would have felt right at home filling the piano chair on this session, and he is surely smiling down at what Nelson and his mates have achieved. (www.jazzdepot.com)

■ One of the marvelous things about good musical material is that a creative musician with imagination can transform a piece into something completely new while still maintaining the integrity of the source material. This is well illustrated on Rags and Roots (ZOHO – 201703), a recording of 13 of those tunes by the full band. It is all that it should be, full of terrific songs, performed with verve by this vibrant band. The hip arrangements are by the band’s pianist/vocalist John Bauers. Sharing the vocals with Bauers is Vanessa Perea, a young lady with a superb voice who knows how to put a lyric across. Leader/bassist Dave Post has his crew in fine form, swinging their socks off. As the opening selection says, these cats are “Too Marvelous for Words.” They “Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive” as they create “That Old Black Magic” with Mercer’s “Goody, Goody” songs. “I Wanna Be Around” to catch them do their next Mercer concert. If you need a gift for that someone special in your life, consider this album, and think to get “One for My Baby” as a way to say “P.S. I Love You.” Enough of this cuteness; just do not miss this visit to Mercerville. (www.zohomusic.com)

■ What Time Is It? (Savant – 2157) is the latest from vocalist GIACOMO GATES, and one hearing will convince you that it is time to listen to it again. Gates is as hip as they come among vocalists, and he is abetted on this album by an equally hip quintet of Jerry Weldon on tenor sax, John di Martino on piano, Tony Lombardozzi on guitar, Lonnie Plaxico on bass and Vincent Ector on drums. From the opening selection, “I Didn’t Know What Time It Was,” preceded by the spoken word intro penned by Gates that gave this album its title, it was evident that he had produced another entertaining collection. Probably the most unusual choice of material was his medium swing take on “Silhouettes,” a 1950s hit for a relatively obscure doo-wop group named The Rays. Like everything that he sings, Gates turns it into a gem. All ten songs get primo Gates treatments, and that results in an album full of interesting moments, often infused with the irresistible Gates sense of

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OTHER VIEWS

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humor. Giacomo Gates is a singular figure in today’s jazz scene, and once again he delivers an irresistibly magic collection of jazz vocalizing. (www.jazzdepot.com)

MARK WINKLER is a jazz singer/lyricist who is equally effective singing his own creations or the quality material that he chooses to perform by other songwriters. He does an equal amount of both on his new album, The Company I Keep (Café Pacific Records – 45135). Backed by a shifting cast of fine Los Angeles area musicians, Winkler shows that he is not just a singer, but a storyteller supreme. For this album, he has included six songs with his own lyrics, and six tunes by others, including two standards, “Lucky to Be Me” and “Here’s to Life.” He shares the vocals on five tunes, “Walk Between the Raindrops” with Jackie Ryan, “Strollin’” with Cheryl Bentyne, “But It Still Ain’t So” with Steve Tyrell, “Stolen Moments” with Claire Martin, and “Rainproof” with Sara Gazarek, all of whom nicely complement Winkler’s style. Winkler is another singer for whom the term hip is appropriate, and that term is equally applicable to his lyric writing. This is a collection infused with intelligence in the selection of material, the arrangements, and, most importantly, in the performances. (markwinklermusic.com) Mark Winkler will be having a CD release gig for this album at Birdland on July 13 at 6 pm.

The photo of RONNY WHYTE on his new album, Shades of Whyte (Audiophile – 353) shows Whyte grinning wryly with a pair of sunglasses resting on his nose low enough to expose his eyes. It serves as a nice pictorial pun to emphasize that this album is a collection of good songs with no particular theme other than that he is a singer/pianist who nicely handles a variety of material and styles. In this undertaking he is superbly supported in various combinations by Lou Caputo on tenor sax and flute, Alex Nguyen on trumpet, Sean Harkness on guitar, Boots Maleson on bass, and either Marucio De Souza or David Silliman on drums. Whyte is one of those singers who seems to come up with new or too often ignored material that brings unexpected delights to the fore. In Whyte’s case, the songs are often ones for which he has written the music or words or both. Particularly fetching are two selections, “Linger Awhile” with lyrics by Roger Schore, and “Blame It on the Movies” with Whyte’s words and music. Yes, there are some familiar tunes like “The Song Is You,” “I’m Old Fashioned” and “Dancing in the Dark,” but there are wonderful songs like “Nina Never Knew.” “I’ll Close My Eyes,” “For Heaven’s Sake” and “Too Late Now” that, while not unknown, are too rarely performed. Whyte pays full respect to any lyric that he sings, and does so in a relaxed and confident way. There used to be ample opportunities for fans of good songs to drop into a venue in New York City on a regular basis to hear performers like Ronny Whyte, Hugh Shannon, Charles DeForest, Bobby Short and Charles Cochran. Now we often have to rely on recorded collections like Shades of Whyte to keep us musically satisfied. (www.jazzology.com)

Songs by the Gershwin brothers have been the focus of countless albums over the years, so it is harder and harder to find fresh approaches to these songs that work without feeling gimmicky. ELIJAH ROCK has just released Gershwin For My Soul (self-produced) that takes a fresh look at eleven songs plus the original by Rock and pianist/arranger Kevin Toney that provided the title for this album. Rock takes some chances here like offering a Hip Hop take on the tongue twisting lyrics created by Ira Gershwin for “Tchaikovsky (and Other Russians),” originally written with Kurt Weill for Danny Kaye in Lady in the Dark. He takes “Love Walked In” at an unusually leisurely pace, making it sound like it was written to be sung that way. His “Shall We Dance,” accompanied by John Storie on guitar, is spot on. Rock has a deep baritone that rests easily on the ears of the listener. He has given the Gershwin songs interpretations that often have a contemporary edge while respecting their origins. (www.elijahrock.com)

Shirley Horn was a unique singer. She could perform songs at the slowest tempi without making them feel at all that they were dragging, rather that they were proceeding at a pace that was their natural milieu. Vocalist PETER CAMPBELL has taken inspiration from Horn on Loving You: Celebrating Shirley Horn (self-produced). Campbell, who also sounds like he took some inspiration from Michael Feinstein, lovingly addresses 13 tunes recorded by Horn. With the assistance of Mark Kieswetter on piano, Reg Schwager on guitar, Ross Macintyre on bass and Kevin Turcotte on trumpet, Campbell approaches each song with care and feeling. Horn often chose songs that were a bit off of the beaten path, and Campbell has followed her in his choice of material. The most familiar selections are “A Time for Love,” “There’s No You” and “Wild Is the Wind.” Others that many listeners might recognize are “The Great City” and the Edith Piaf classic “If You Love Me.” Overall the program is tasty and full of carefully crafted lyrics that Campbell approaches with sensitivity, conveying the essence of the words in an understated, but deeply understanding manner. His tribute to Horn’s musical legacy is heartfelt and should appeal to those who admired her work. (www.petercAMPBELLmusic.com)

When BRIA SKONBERG first arrived on the scene, she had both feet planted firmly in the traditional jazz camp. As time has passed, she has not turned away from her roots, but has expanded her musical horizons in many interesting ways. Her latest album, With a Twist (Okeh/Sony Masterworks – 540602) finds her scurrying in many different directions, all of them with a fun destination. A dozen of the 13 tracks have Skonberg vocalizing in addition to her always superb trumpet work. Her bandmates for this disc include Gil Goldstein on keyboards and accordion, Sullivan Fortner on piano, Scott Colley on bass and Matt Wilson on drums. The program is a bit of this and a touch of that. She digs into the past for tunes like “My Baby Just Cares for Me,” “Cocktails for Two,” “High Hat, Trumpet and Rhythm” and “Back in Your Own Back Yard,” but adds some surprising twists as you would expect from the album’s title. Her take on “Cocktails for Two” starts off sounding very much like it is being performed in a piano bar before the instrumental interlude gives a nod to the classic Spike Jones recording. For “Alright, Okay, You Win,” she uses the Quincy Jones piece “Soul Bossa Nova” as the instrumental base, turning this blues into a tune with a Latin feeling. There are also three very different Skonberg originals. Her noir-ish reading of Leonard Cohen’s “Dance Me to the End of Love” is a gem of a performance. Bria Skonberg is establishing her own tradition, one that is impossible to place in any particular stylistic box. She goes wherever the feeling takes her, and the results are stimulating and fun. (www.amazon.com)

Let me say up front that I was not familiar with the music of Janis Ian before listening to Bright Light & Promises: Redefining Janis Ian (Origin – 82732) by vocalist SARAH PARTRIDGE. Ian’s songs are infused with much social commentary, and were, in their original stylistic form, in the tradition of folk music. Partridge had the idea to create an album of Ian’s songs done as jazz pieces. To aid her in this process, she assembled a fine band comprising pianist Allen Farnham, who also wrote most of the arrangements, bassist Bill Moring, drummer Tim Horner, who penned the other charts, multi-reedman Scott Robinson, trombonist Ben Williams, acoustic guitarist Paul Meyers and electric guitarist Ben Stein. Partridge also collaborated with Ian on two new songs. The program has 13 selections, including Ian’s two most well known songs, “Society’s Child” and “At Seventeen.” Partridge is in fine form on her vocals, powerful, assured and committed. The arrange-ments are well conceived and the execution by the band is exquisite. Whether these songs
work for you in a jazz context will probably be a function of how you respond to Ian’s lyrics. The songs with the most jazzy feeling both musically and lyrically are “A Quarter Past Heartache,” one of the Partridge/Ian selections that opens the album, “Belle of the Blues,” “Silly Habits” and “Bright Lights & Promises.” Partridge and her crew have done a fine job of bringing her concept to fruition. (originarts.com)

**Book Review**

**Billie Holiday At Sugar Hill**

*By Jerry Dantzie and Grayson Dantzie*

Thames & Hudson, New York | 144 pages, 2017, $40.00

In April 1957, Billie Holiday had a weeklong gig at Sugar Hill, a jazz club in Newark, New Jersey. Decca Records had engaged freelance photojournalist Jerry Dantzie to photograph Holiday. Dantzie was acquainted with William Dufty, the co-author of her autobiography, *Lady Sings the Blues*. Dufty introduced Dantzie to Holiday, and she agreed to allow him to do his photographing of her during her week at Sugar Hill.

Jerry Dantzie was an accomplished photographer and educator whose works have been exhibited at several major art museums. He was also an adjunct professor at Long Island University and Columbia University’s School of Journalism.

The photographs reproduced in *Billie Holiday at Sugar Hill* were assembled by Dantzie’s son, Grayson, who also provided a closing essay that gives the details surrounding the week that his father spent photographing Holiday.

The images, mostly in black and white, capture Holiday in a variety of situations, performing at the club, hanging with her musicians, walking on the streets of Newark, interacting with fans, cuddling her beloved Chihuahua, Pepi, in her dressing room, visiting Dufty, his wife and son at their apartment, and with her husband, Louis McKay.

Holiday had a life filled with many moments of stress brought on by her exposure to racism, a childhood of poverty, her addiction to drugs, abusive relationships with several men, and a period of incarceration stemming from her drug use, a life effectively portrayed in the articulate and touching opening essay by Zadie Smith. The effects of these hardships took their toll on Holiday, but even through all of this, her innate beauty still was evident at the age of 42, only two years before she lost her life to the effects of her excesses.

Grayson Dantzie has done a superb job of selecting and ordering the photographs taken by his father. The images are intimate portraits of a woman who still maintained an ability to experience joy in the face of all of her personal difficulties. It is evident that she is most happy when performing, but her affection for her friends and Pepi offer occasions when she can allow herself to be absorbed by the joys of these moments, and they have been wonderfully captured by Dantzie. The somewhat grainy quality of the photographs effectively conveys the conflicting forces constantly present in the life of Billie Holiday.

This is a unique look at a woman who overcame long odds to succeed as an artist of great accomplishment, but who never was able to enjoy the kind of rewarding life that her talent should have earned for her.
Morris Jazz
The Bickford Theatre at the Morris Museum, Morristown NJ
Tickets/Information: 973-971-3706

June is bustin’ out all over this year with American jazz!
What more can be said about this season’s “grand finale” on Monday, June 5 at 7:30 pm. Neville Dickie, one of the world’s foremost exponents of stride piano and boogie woogie, will be joined by the incomparable Midiri Brothers for an evening of jazz for the finale of this season.

From the UK, Neville Dickie has made a name for himself on both sides of the pond with his Waller style of playing: a rumbling left hand providing counter-melodies to the sparkling improvisations on the right. Today, Dickie continues to entertain crowds all over the UK and his band “The Rhythmakers” is always in demand. He regularly tours in Switzerland, France, Belgium and Germany as well as here in the US.

Joining him for the third June in a row, are the Midiri Brothers with Paul Midiri (vibes, drums and trombone) and Joe Midiri (clarinet and sax). The past two season’s concerts were sensational and jam packed. Don’t be left out of these terrific jazz all-stars!

Speaking of annual events, the Bickford Jazz Showcase once again presents its Summer JazzFEST. All summer concerts begin at 7:30 pm. This season begins on Monday, July 10 led by jazz favorite Dan Levinson as he holds his Midsummer Night’s Jazz Party. We’ll take a trip to Sin City on Thursday, July 20 with John Patterson’s Full Count Jazz Band – Night in Las Vegas. Later that same month, Canadian singer, trumpeter, and songwriter Bria Skonberg brings her unique blend of modern day pop sensibility and sizzling musicianship to join the JazzFEST on Monday, July 24. More details about these concerts next month. And look forward to our 2017/2018 season with more of the best jazz, a mix of both new artists from the Tri-State and beyond and, of course, NJJS favorites.

Vanessa Perea, Dave Post and John Bauers
First up on June 21 is the popular powerhouse unit, the Jazz Lobsters Big Band, led by pianist/arranger James Lafferty. It’s hard to find a good big band these days and the Jazz Lobsters are one of the finest in the tri-state area, comprised of personnel from all over New York and New Jersey. The band explores the entire gamut of big band music from the classic sounds of 1930s-era Benny Goodman (clarinetist Audrey Welber-Lafferty is sure to break it up with her interpretation of “Sing, Sing, Sing”) to modern arrangements of the likes of Quincy Jones, while exploring Latin and salsa sounds along the way.

On June 21, the Lobsters will be featuring the velvety smooth bass-baritone voice of Michael Andrews. Andrews was the recipient of the 2016 Philadelphia Clef Club Jazz Award for Male Vocalist of the Year and has often been compared to the likes of Johnny Hartman, Arthur Prysock and Joe Williams. This will be his Ocean County College debut, making what was already a hot ticket that much hotter. The Jazz Lobsters Big Band once held the record for most tickets sold to a MidWeek Jazz concert and they haven’t performed in Toms River since the fall of 2015 so this is guaranteed to be a packed house.O rder your tickets in advance at grunincenter.org!!

2017 is also the centennial celebration of “The First Lady of Song,” Ella Fitzgerald, another jazz great who came through the ranks of the big band era, making her reputation with Chick Webb in the 1930s. To pay tribute to Ella, we have enlisted the popular Swingadelic to return to Toms River on July 25, a rare Tuesday edition of MidWeek Jazz.

Though Swingadelic, led by bassist Dave Post, has had a popular following in North Jersey and New York City for years, they didn’t make their way to Toms River until 2016 when they paid tribute to “The Three Louie’s,” Armstrong, Jordan and Prima. The show was a sensation, guaranteeing a return date this summer. The fantastic vocalist Vanessa Perea will be back to conjure up the spirit of Ella, along with pianist John Bauers, who I am sure will inhabit the role of some of Fitzgerald’s famous duet partners. Again, this is a Tuesday evening performance so plan accordingly!

Swingadelic’s show marks the start of MidWeek Jazz’s 2017-18 season. The entire year has been booked and will appear in the near future at grunincenter.org. I look forward to previewing the upcoming season, including the return of Geoff Gallante, the OCC debut of Champian Fulton, Dan Levinson’s tribute to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the Midiri Brothers’s 80th anniversary celebration of Benny Goodman’s Carnegie Hall concert, the Anderson Brothers performing Porgy and Bess, Glenn Cryer’s tribute to Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang and more!

Jazz For Shore
Midweek Jazz at the Arts & Community Center at Ocean County College, Toms River NJ
Tickets/Information: 732-255-0500

Swing will be the theme of this summer’s upcoming MidWeek Jazz concerts at Ocean County College with two top-notch New Jersey-based bands making their much-anticipated returns to Toms River.

Jazz’s 2017-18 season.

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New curtain time is 7:30 pm; $20 at the door, $17 with reservation

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All shows 8–9:30 pm; $22 regular admission, $18 for seniors, $12 for students.

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All shows 8–9:30 pm; $22 regular admission, $18 for seniors, $12 for students.
Jazz At The Sanctuary
1867 Sanctuary at Ewing | 101 Scotch Road, Ewing NJ
Tickets/Information: 609-392-6409

The NJJS co-sponsors jazz events at 1867 Sanctuary. Members receive a $5 discount on admission. This Romanesque Revival church hall has exceptional acoustics, padded seating and is wheelchair-accessible. Concerts have varied start times and are either one 90-minute set, or two sets with intermission. Free light refreshments (including cookies!) are served.

Shows This Month:
Sat. | June 3, 8 pm: Jack Furlong Quartet
Jack Furlong (Sax), Sean Gough (Piano), Jon McElroy (Bass), and John O’Keefe (Drums)

Sun. | June 11, 3 pm: Joe Holt and Danny Tobias
Jazz improvisations for piano and trumpet.

Sat. | June 24, 8 pm: Luiz Simas
Brazilian solo jazz piano — Bob Kull

$20 for general admission and $5 for students with ID. Group tickets (10 or more in advance) are $15 each. Tickets are available online, at the box office 609-392-6409 or by email: 1867sanctuary@preservationnj.org.

About NJJS
Mission Statement: The mission of the New Jersey Jazz Society is to promote and preserve the great American musical art form known as Jazz through live jazz performances and educational outreach initiatives and scholarships.

To accomplish our Mission, we produce a monthly magazine, JERSEY JAZZ, sponsor live jazz events, and provide scholarships to New Jersey college students studying jazz. Through our outreach program, “Generations of Jazz,” we go into schools to teach students about the history of Jazz while engaging them in an entertaining and interactive presentation.

Founded in 1972, the Society is run by a board of directors who meet monthly to conduct the business of staging our music events, awarding scholarships to New Jersey college jazz students, and conducting Generations of Jazz programs in local school systems, among other things. The membership is comprised of jazz devotees from all parts of the state, the country and the world.

The New Jersey Jazz Society is a qualified organization of the New Jersey Cultural Trust. Visit www.njjs.org, e-mail info@njjs.org for more information on any of our programs and services:
- e-mail updates
- Student scholarships
- Memorial Stomp
- Collaborative Jazz Concerts:
- Ocean County College
- 1867 Sanctuary at Ewing

NJJS supports JazzFeast presented by Palmer Square, Downtown Princeton. NJJS is a proud supporter of the Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival, the NJCU President’s Jazz Festival in Jersey City, and more.

Member Benefits
What do you get for your dues?
- Jersey Jazz Journal — a monthly journal considered the best jazz society publications in the country, packed with feature articles, photos, jazz calendars, upcoming events and news about the NJ Jazz Society.
- FREE Jazz Socials — See www.njjs.org and Jersey Jazz for updates.
- Musical Events — NJJS sponsors and co-produces a number of jazz events each year, ranging from intimate concerts to large dance parties and picnics. Members receive discounts on ticket prices for the Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp. Plus there’s a free concert at the Annual Meeting in December and occasionally other free concerts. Ticket discounts (where possible) apply to 2 adults, plus children under 18 years of age. Singles may purchase two tickets at member prices.
- The Record Bin — a collection of CDs, not generally found in music stores, available at reduced prices at most NJJS concerts and events and through mail order.
- FREE listings — Musician members get listed FREE on our website.

Join NJJS
MEMBERSHIP LEVELS Member benefits are subject to update.
- Family $45: See above for details.
- Family 3-YEAR $115 See above for details.
- Youth $15: For people under 25 years of age. Be sure to give the year of your birth on the application where noted.
- Give-a-Gift $25: Members in good standing may purchase one or more gift memberships at any time for only $25 each. Please supply the name and address of giftee. Good for new memberships only.
- Fan ($75 – $99/family)
- Jazzzer ($100 – $249/family)
- Sideman ($250 – $499/family)
- Bandleader $500+/family) Members at Jazzzer Level and above receive special benefits. These change periodically, so please contact Membership for details.
- Corporate Membership ($1000)

To receive a membership application, for more information or to join:
Call 973-610-1308 or email membership@njjs.org
OR visit www.njjs.org
OR simply send a check payable to “NJJS” to: New Jersey Jazz Society, c/o Mike Katz, 382 Springfield Ave. Suite 217, Summit NJ 07901.

Round Jersey
Round Jersey concerts are produced in conjunction with the New Jersey Jazz Society.
From the Crow’s Nest
By Bill Crow

In one of my favorite stories in his autobiography, Louis Armstrong told about a musician who worked on the riverboat with him on a trip up the Mississippi from New Orleans. He said that the guy had a farm in Louisiana where his relatives were raising cotton for him. He saved every nickel he earned on the boat, and sent it all home to pay for the farm. He wouldn’t even spend money on meals, subsisting on apples. Then he discovered that the boll weevils had eaten his crop, the relatives had spent the money, and after worrying and scrimping and starving himself for the whole trip, he ended up losing the property. Louis said, “That taught me never to deprive my stomach. I’ll probably never be rich, but I will be a fat man.”

Eve Zanni was contacted by a young film maker, Brian Chidester, who wanted to talk about a recording she had made. Over the course of their long conversation, they discovered that they were both fond of Milton “Mezz” Mezzrow’s book Really the Blues, in which, among other things, Mezz told about his role as a purveyor of pot to his musician friends.

Eve and Brian’s conversation ranged through many topics and then onto Lester Young, who was known to his colleagues and admirers as Prez. Eve told Brian about interviewing her friend and neighbor Anita, Gil Evans’s widow, for a book she was writing about Prez. Anita had told her how, during World War Two, Gil would drive hundreds of miles to visit Prez where he was incarcerated in the Fort Leavenworth Disciplinary Barracks, bringing him little gifts of herbal reinforcements. Hearing this, Brian quipped, “So, Gil was Prez’s Mezz?”

Steve Johns, who recently retired from his position on tuba with the Metropolitan Opera and the NYC Ballet, broke into the New York music world in the late1960s by subbing for as many players as possible. His first call on his own job was a week with the Jose Limon dance company at a Broadway theater. Thrilled, he showed up at the first rehearsal as the pit filled with musicians. When it came to Steve’s time to enter the pit, there wasn’t a square foot of space remaining. He was crestfallen when the contractor, Jerry Tarack, told him to go home, even though he was assured he would be paid for the engagement. It was an ominous beginning to his career, but Steve went on to perform with most of the dance companies that have come to New York, including stints as principal tuba with the Joffrey Ballet and the New York City Ballet.

Scott Robinson sent me this: Frank Kimbrough asked me some time ago if I could play in a trio with him on a night in January, for the “Sound It Out” series at Greenwich House. I had to turn it down, because of a European tour I had booked, which later was cancelled. So, I ended up in town that night, checking out what turned out to be a really great show. Best part was, when I arrived, I got to tell Frank, “Hey, I just paid my eighteen bucks to hear the show I can’t make!”

Here’s a news article that appeared on the Jay Leno show a while back. It has been making the rounds again on Facebook. It was printed in an Illinois newspaper: “TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR — Due to a typing error, Saturday’s story on local artist Jon Henninger mistakenly reported that Henninger’s bandmate Eric Lyday was on drugs. The story should have read that Lyday was on drums. The Sentinel regrets the error.”

My old friend the late Joe Beck said he liked the nickname I gave him. I used to call him Big Spider. And Jimmy Rowles used to call George Mraz “Bounce.” (Because he was a “bad” Czech.)

Mark Vinci spent a summer at the Juilliard Summer Jazz Camp in Aiken, South Carolina. On a Sunday, a day off, he took a cappuccino and the New York Times crossword to the town square, a charming spot. On the hour, a church bell began to play the Big Ben chimes. It reminded Mark of Red Garland’s intro to Miles Davis’s recording of “If I Were A Bell.” He had his piccolo with him, and on the next hour, he joined in, playing along with the church bell.

An elderly African American and his wife hobbled over to Mark. “Young man,” he said, “You’re remarkable! Where are you from?” Mark said, “New York City.” The man said, “I don’t know why, but I feel as though I have to tell you this. Did you know Martin Luther King’s mother was a piano player? And did you know that she was shot by a deranged black man while she was playing piano in a church?” Mark said he didn’t know that. “Nice to meet you, and goodbye,” said the man.

Alberta King was, in fact, shot and killed while playing the organ at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta in 1974.

Bill Crow is a freelance musician and writer. His articles have appeared in DownBeat, The Jazz Review, and Gene Lee’s Jazzletter. His books include Jazz Anecdotes, From Birdland to Broadway and Jazz Anecdotes: Second Time Around. The preceding is reprinted with permission from Allegro, the monthly magazine of AFM Local 802.
New Jersey Jazz Society

Great Gift Idea!

Jazz Up Your Wardrobe

Show your Jazz Love with NJJS and Pee Wee Stomp shirts!

At $15, they make great gifts for yourself and your friends. You can buy them in person at some of our events, and we can bring them to Jazz Socials on request. But if you don’t want to wait, order via mail and get your shirt within days! Shirts are 100% cotton, crew-neck, short-sleeved shirts; they may run slightly snug. Cost is $15 per shirt + $4 shipping fee.

**Styles** — choose from:
- white shirt with red NJJS logo
- black shirt with red NJJS logo
- white shirt with red+black Pee Wee art

**Sizes** — choose:
- unisex S, M, L, XL, or XXL
- ladies’ S, M, L
  (slightly more open neckline, smaller sleeve cut, slightly tapered body)

Make check payable to NJJS. Mail to NJJS, c/o Linda Lobdell, 352 Highland Ave., Newark NJ 07104. BE SURE to specify style and size, and give us clear mailing instructions. Please also provide your telephone number and email address in case we have questions about your order. Do YOU have questions? contact Linda Lobdell at 201-306-2769 or LLobdeLL@optonline.net.

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The Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University—Newark is the largest and most comprehensive library and archive of jazz and jazz-related materials in the world! — a valuable resource for jazz researchers, students, musicians and fans. The archives are open to the public from 9 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday, but please call and make an appointment.

Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers, The State University of NJ
John Cotton Dana Library, 185 University Avenue, Newark, NJ 07102
Web site: newarkwww.rutgers.edu/IJS 973-353-5595

**JAZZ RESEARCH ROUNDTABLES**

Since 1995, IJS has hosted its monthly Jazz Research Roundtable meetings, which have become a prestigious forum for scholars, musicians, and students engaged in all facets of jazz research. Noted authors, such as Gary Giddins, Stanley Crouch, and Richard Sudhalter have previewed their works, as have several filmmakers. Musicians who have shared their life stories include trumpeter Joe Wilder, pianist Richard Wyands, guitarist Remo Palmieri and Lawrence Lucie, trombonist Grachan Moncur III, and drummer/jazz historian Kenny Washington.

**CONCERTS/PERFORMANCE**

- The US presents occasional free Wednesday afternoon concerts in the Dana Room of the John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers-Newark. Theses include the Newark Legacy series and the Jazz With An International Flavor series that recently featured the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Quartet with Mark Taylor (drums) and Yasushi Nakamura (bass).

IJS presented the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Quartet in a rare performance on the Rutgers Newark campus on March 23. The husband-and-wife team — she an NEA Jazz Master, he an award-winning saxophonist and flutist — also answered questions from the audience about their many years of jazz performance. Photo by Mitchell Seidel.
What’s New?
Members new and renewed

We welcome these friends of jazz who recently joined NJJS or renewed their memberships. We’ll eventually see everyone’s name here as they renew at their particular renewal months. Members with an asterisk have taken advantage of our three-years-for-$115 membership, and new members with a † received a gift membership. Members who joined at a patron level appear in bold.

Renewed Members
Robert Adams,
Florham Park, NJ
Dr. & Mrs. Steven Alexander,
Wayne, NJ *
Mr. Scott E. Brown,
Phoenix, MD
Mr. John Burns,
Bridgewater, NJ
Mr. Gerry Cappuccio,
Passaic, NJ
Mr. & Mrs. George H.
Elwood, Utica, NY
Ms. Theona L. Feibush,
Woodbridge, NJ *
Peter Gallagher, Wantage, NJ
Mr. Henry W. Hagen,
High Bridge, NJ
Mr. Michael Kolber, Union, NJ
Ms. Marcia Levy,
Englewood, NJ
Dick Lowenthal,
Hackensack, NJ
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur G. Mattei,
Lawrenceville, NJ *
Mr. & Mrs. Joan & Bud
Meeker, Roseland, NJ
Mr. David Niu, Madison, NJ *
Mr. & Mrs. Donald E.
Perlman, Succasunna, NJ
Mrs. Suzanne La Croix
Robinson,
West Orange, NJ
Donald F. and Carolyn
Shaw, Denville, NJ
Sam Testa,
Scotch Plains, NJ
Mr. John Vanas,
Slingerlands, NY
Mr. Raymond Zarrow,
Fair Lawn, NJ

New Members
Grant Alger, Doylestown, PA
Sally and Joe Barber,
Pennington, NJ
Kate Berton,
East Rutherford, NJ
Carl Davis, Union, NJ
Suzanne Douglas,
Maplewood, NJ *
Max Eng, Summit, NJ
Chris Jandes, Maplewood, NJ
Carole Kenyon,
Scotch Plains, NJ
Yasko Koko, Garwood, NJ *
Ronald & Jeanne Parke,
Livingston, NJ
Summit Free Public Library,
Summit, NJ
Nicholas Roccaforte,
Morris Plains, NJ
Alan Schulman,
West Orange, NJ
Deborah Shelton,
Montclair, NJ
Adrienne Tannenbaum and
James Schoen, Pottersville, NJ

JAZZ TRIVIA ANSWERS
questions on page 4

1. Jazz Night in America
2. Village Vanguard
3. Ambrose Akinmusire
4. Anat Cohen
5. Gary Smulyan
6. Regina Carter
7. Cecile McLorin Salvant
8. Maria Schneider

 NJJS Offers Patron Level Benefits

The New Jersey Jazz Society is a non-profit organization with a number of ambitious programs and a finite level of resources. Event ticket sales and member dues cover only a fraction of our expenses, making it necessary to find sponsors and partners to help us make ends meet. Your donations in excess of basic member dues are a great way of partnering with us, and very much needed.

In an effort to encourage higher-level memberships, New Jersey Jazz Society has defined several new categories of benefits for such donors.

Fan ($75 – 99): acknowledgement in Jersey Jazz
Jazzer ($100 – 249): acknowledgement in Jersey Jazz, 1 Pee Wee Stomp ticket plus preferred, reserved seating
Sideman ($250 – 499): acknowledgement in Jersey Jazz, 2 Pee Wee Stomp tickets, 1 Jazzfest ticket, plus preferred, reserved seating at both events
Bandleader ($500+): acknowledgement in Jersey Jazz, 2 Pee Wee Stomp tickets, 4 Jazzfest tickets, plus preferred, reserved seating at both events

Please consider making an extra donation in one of these amounts, or an amount of your choosing. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. For more information, contact Irene Miller at membership@njjs.org or call 973-713-7496. To make a donation right away, New Jersey Jazz Society, c/o Mike Katz, 382 Springfield Ave. Suite 217, Summit NJ 07901.

Looking for a Few Good Musicians

NJJS member Tom Piccirillo, a rhythm guitarist a la Freddie and Bucky, is looking for a handful of “retired” jazz musicians to gather once in a while at someone’s house (perhaps his own in Warren, NJ) to play simply for the fun of it. Interested players can contact Tom at tompicc@optonline.net.
Since music offerings frequently change, we recommend you call venue to confirm there is live music at the time you plan to visit.
Tell them you saw it in Jersey Jazz!

We want to include any locale that offers jazz on a regular, ongoing basis. Also please advise us of any errors you’re aware of in these listings.

New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Fridays 6:30-9:30 PM

DUET'S
19 Dennis St. 732-249-1551
Saturdays, 7-11 PM

DUE MARI
78 Albany Street. 732-296-1600
Saturdays, 7-11 PM
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Fridays 6:30-9:30 PM

THE HYATT REGENCY NEW BRUNSWICK
2 Albany St. 732-299-0553
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Thursdays, 8-10:30 pm, INC BAR AND KITCHEN 302 George Street 732-640-0553
New Brunswick Jazz Project presents live jazz Wednesdays 8:00-11 PM

STATE THEATRE
15 Livingston Ave. 732-246-7469
15 Livingston Ave.
STATE THEATRE INc Bar and Kitchen

ThE hyATT rEGENcy
New Brunswick Jazz Project
Saturdays, 7–11 pm
78 Albany Street . 908-810-1844
Sundays 8 pm, $3 cover

vOorhees
COFFEE WORKS ROASTERY & CAFE
910 Haddonfield-Berlin Road 856-701-2064

WATChING
WATChING ARTS cENTEr
18 Sterling Rd. 908-753-0190

WAYne
LAKE EDGE GRILL
56 Lake Drive West Wayne, Nj 07470 973-632-7800
Friday & Saturday

NOVU RestAuRANT
1055 Hamburg Tpke. Wayne, Nj 973-694-3500
Fridays

WILLIAM pAteRSOn uNIVeRSITY
300 Pompton Rd. 973-649-3500

WEstfied
16 PROSPeCT WINe BAR & BISTRO
16 Prospect St. 908-232-7320
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 8 pm

WEst OrANge
HIGHLAWN PAVILION
Eagle Rock Reservation 973-731-3463
Fridays

LUNA STAGE
555 Valley Rd. 973-395-5551

SUZY QUE’S
34 South Valley Rd.

For the link to each venue’s website, please visit www.NJJS.org, and click on “Jazz Support”

Also visit Andy McDonough’s njjazzlist.com

The Name Dropper

Recommendations may be e-mailed to editor@njjs.org.

DAVE STRYKER TRIO – With Jared Gold, organ and Byron Landham, drums, at INC American Bar and Kitchen, New Brunswick on June 14, 8-11 pm. The bluesy and prolific guitarist (27 CDs as a leader to date) is touring behind his new release, Messin’ With Mr. T, a salute to tenor saxophone great Stanley Turrentine with whom Mr. Styker was a featured sideman for a decade. The bar is the new Wednesday venue for the also prolific New Brunswick Jazz Project. There’s a surprising looking menu that ranges from Voo Doo Shrimp to Kung Pao Cauliflower and Country Fried Cod (with corn fritters and truffle honey) and no cover charge.

CONRAD HERWIG QUINTET – With Marc Stacio, piano, Kenny Davis, bass, Abraham Burton, sax and Robby Ameen, drums at the Metuchen Junebug ArtFest on June 24, 8-10 PM on the main stage. The every-Saturday-night in June music and art festival is in its 10th year and is featuring a jazz group for the first time! Now there’s something that deserves encouragement. The all Rutgers faculty group plans a program of jazz standards, with a nod to the Latin side. Grab-N-Go meals ($10-$20 range) are offered at many local restaurants on ArtFest nights.

For June 2017