

Jersey Jazz

Journal of the New Jersey Jazz Society

Dedicated to the performance,

promotion and preservation of jazz.

Volume 36 • Issue 11

December 2008



“Hello, Central, give me Dr. Jazz”

Congratulations to NJJS member Dr. Francis A. Forte who was feted at a special concert on October 25th at the Englewood Hospital and Medical Center. With a musical program organized by guitarist Roni Ben-Hur, the tribute, called *Jazz*, marked the 15th anniversary of the Dizzy Gillespie Cancer Institute and the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund. The medical center provides free medical care for jazz musicians in need, under the leadership of Dr. Forte to fulfill a request made by Dizzy Gillespie when he was in the doctor's care at the time of his death at age 75 in 1993.

Dr. Forte was also honored for his philanthropic work by the Jazz Foundation of America at their annual dinner and concert last May. He is a noted physician, humanitarian and an accomplished jazz guitarist, as well as an occasional contributor to *Jersey Jazz* and *Just Jazz Guitar* magazine.

—Tony Mottola

Story and photos on pages 26 and 27

Dr. Frank Forte.
Photo by
Steve Hockstein/
HarvardStudio.com

Free for members!
NJJS Annual Meeting
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 • CONCERT
see pp 3 and 8

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Prez Sez

By Andrea Tyson President, NJJS

This is my final President's message for 2008. As I write this it's the end of October and I'm off to Israel and the election of our next President of the U.S. is in the future. I want to wish everybody a happy and healthy New Year. Our hope is that we'll be able to create a bridge over troubled water for you by bringing you some fine concerts and, as always, by keeping you informed of what's jazzy in Jersey (and thereabouts). We do hope you go out and support our advertisers (some are very new to us) and listen to some wonderful live jazz to warm up the cold months ahead.

Right up front I want to thank Bernardsville Print Center for being a very good friend to the NJJS for several years, by working with us to get this magazine out on time every month and into your hands, by printing and binding our Jack Stine books, by making up our business cards, oh, the list goes on and on. But it's time to thank them for their contribution of time and effort. So, thanks to Rich, Patti and Cheri for all you do for us and we wish you well for the future.

And another great big thank you to our editors, Tony Mottola and Linda Lobdell, who not only go that extra mile — but many extra miles every issue — much to our pleasure. Tony and Linda keep our Website looking wonderful, along with Steve Albin our talented Webmaster. Check out the Website at www.njjs.org to see just what I'm talking about.

■ I was very fortunate to learn of **Princeton's Concert Jazz Ensemble Swing: Standard Time** program of October 11 while Anthony D.J. Branker was at JazzFeast leading his University Jazztet. As always, the early fall presentations are fraught with peril as all college bands have entering students and they were swinging their hearts out under the kind and humorous leadership of Professor Branker. I especially enjoyed the evening listening to their special guest sophomore singer, Amelia Wells from Kansas City, Kansas (with her dad in the audience!). Her style and delivery were very creative and her mellifluous tones filled the auditorium gloriously. If you haven't been to Richardson Auditorium, go onto their Website and make some time to visit. Princeton is a fun town with many choices for dinner before a concert. Check out Frank Mulvaney's Jazz U column for details of Princeton and other New Jersey university jazz programs.

■ I received an invitation to the **National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters** presentation on Friday night October 15 at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Hall and witnessed an evening of stardom. I was able to include one of our premier photo-journalists, Mitchell Seidel, as a guest. We all had a wonderful time and we look forward to Mitchell's review and pictures in this issue.

■ Our **October Member Meeting** was very interesting for vocalists and non-vocalists alike — three singers — Pam Purvis, Carrie Jackson and Laura

Got Inspiration for education?

We are looking for a person to act as a liaison to work within our Education Committee. The Society has an educational outreach program, GENERATIONS OF JAZZ (GOJ). It is a one-hour live performance (Pam Purvis is the Musical Director) that gets booked mostly into schools, but sometimes libraries, hospitals, etc. to foster knowledge and interest in jazz, the only truly American musical art form. For an hour or so, six musicians bring the audience through a series of jazz 'generations' from field shouts to bebop and each discusses the unique relationship of the instruments to each other specifically in a jazz band. Usually, Board Member Stan Myers, jazz historian, is the emcee of each performance.

The position comes along with detailed training — from President Andrea Tyson, present committee member, Elliott Tyson, and Pam. It entails contacting schools, getting bookings, sending out confirmation letters, etc. There is more involved, but I don't want to take up too much space. If you want to hear more about joining our education committee, check out our website and click on Generations of Jazz.

generations
of jazz

Tell them you saw it in *Jersey Jazz!*

Hull — singing the same five songs in different styles accompanied by a trio of fabulous musicians with Tomoko Ohno on piano, Steve Freeman on bass and Gordon Lane on drums. Then we had some Q&A and a spirited discussion about how it all comes together perfectly — or not so perfectly. But, that's live jazz! And we had some excellent giveaways from local venues.

■ On November 3, our Member Meeting will feature Jon Burr. For details, see page 8.

■ Please think about joining us for the NJJS Annual Meeting on December 7 at Shanghai Jazz in Madison. We've got so much going on you need to be there to share the memories, the fun, the glories and the defeats. It's all part of the game. Please come on out and listen to the James L. Dean Quartet. I know you won't be disappointed. If you haven't gone to Shanghai Jazz before now's the perfect time. A Sunday afternoon in Madison...what would be better? OK, maybe Oahu might be slightly better! Anyway, anyway, we'd love to see you and thank you for your support and tell you

about our upcoming year. And it's holiday time — buy a gift membership for a friend and/or relative for \$20 and it's a gift that keeps on giving month after month. We'll also have CDs for sale. You can browse our Record Bin inventory on line at www.njjs.org and request that Jack Sinkway bring along the titles you're interested in. Call 201-652-2424 or e-mail jongsinkway@verizon.net

■ **LATE BREAKING NEWS:** Once again, we are the fortunate recipients of a grant from the Arts Council of the Morris Area (ACMA) for our Generations of Jazz presentation led by Musical Director Pam Purvis. If you know of a school, a library or any other institution that would like our presentation for an assembly, please let us know. Check out a sample on our Website. Also, this is a matching grant so if you are so inclined, a donation to this fine program would be greatly appreciated. We have to match it dollar for dollar to the tune of approximately \$3,000 per year for the next two years.

I am sad to report that Shirley Klinger has passed away. Shirley was a great friend of and volunteer for NJJS. We offer our sincere condolences to her family. JJ

NJJS ★ Annual ★ Meeting ★

The end-of-year member sum-up and thank-you!

December 7 ★ 2-5 PM

at Shanghai Jazz

24 Main Street, Madison NJ 07940

Mix and mingle while James Dean's quartet plays two sets, with the Annual Meeting held between the sets. This free concert is a member benefit.

Food and drink available for purchase.

We'll introduce new board members, welcome new volunteers. Holiday gifts will be for sale — CDs, memberships, signed copies of *Stine's Songs*, a compilation of 35 years of Jack's columns from *Jersey Jazz*.

No reservation necessary. Just come!

NJJS Bulletin Board

FREE Member Meetings! Next one: November 23 at Trumpets with Jon Burr. These are a fun way to meet fellow members and friends while enjoying programs that entertain and inform. Find details on page 8. Free for members, but also open to the public, so invite somebody! Watch for details on future get-togethers.

Annual Meeting — This year's is on December 7. A free concert and great social time. See ad at right.

Got E-mail? Some special offers for NJJS members are late-breaking — so please send your E-mail address to NewJerseyJazz@aol.com. For example, one of our partners recently offered a generous buy-one-get-one-free ticket deal. We were only able to extend that offer to our E-mail list.

**Sunday
November 23 2008**
MEMBER MEETING
at Trumpets/
Montclair
Jon Burr
2-5 PM
see p 8

**Sunday
December 7 2008**
ANNUAL MEETING
at Shanghai
Jazz/Madison
2-5 PM
see pp 3 & 8

**Wednesday
February 25 2009**
FREE FILM: TBA
at Library of
the Chathams/
Chatham
7 PM
see p 8

**Sunday
March 1 2009**
PEE WEE RUSSELL
MEMORIAL STOMP
at Birchwood Manor/
Whippany
NOON-5 PM
see p 8

**Friday & Saturday
June 5 & 6 2009**
JAZZFEST
at Drew
University/Madison
see p 54

NJJS Calendar

The Mail Bag

I AM SAD TO NOTE THE PASSING of a longtime fellow NJJS member and volunteer Shirley Klinger. Shirley's was often the first face seen by members as they arrived for any and every event. She was always at the entryway table, selling tickets and memberships, especially in the days we used to have monthly concert meetings. Shirley *was* the membership committee for many years, and her address was used as the Society's address during her very lengthy tenure. Shirley Klinger was an unsung hero.

Joanne Day
Westfield, NJ

I WOULD LIKE YOU KNOW THAT the trouble with the job you are doing for NJJS is that is soooo good, you just can't quit. We will not hear of it. The newsletter has never looked so good. It really gets better every month, not only in layout but content. It has to be the best jazz periodical in existence.

I enjoy the company of 10–15 jazz musicians every Wednesday as we go to lunch in a few restaurants in Bergen County. Weekly you are likely to find: Bucky Pizzarelli, Jerry Bruno, Lew Gluckin, Dick Meldonian, Roger Paige, Joe Ferrante, Dick Bagni, Joe Cass, Vinnie Riccitelli, Paul Gaglia, etc., etc.

It's fun and the old stories could fill a book. If only I could write like Jack Stine...oh well I chewed your ear off enough. If you would ever like to come to lunch, let me know. I'll tell you where and when.




John Viola, Sr.
Blauvelt, NY

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Jazz Trivia

By O. Howie Ponder II Questions

E-Z Pass

Some have said that our questions are too difficult. This month O. Howie is making things easy — if you can answer any one of these nine, the others are easy. But still, they are all *tough* — 'nough said!



1. This Hall of Fame drummer — and Newark resident — died exactly 60 years ago on December 6, 1948 when he fell and fractured his skull on the sidewalk of Market Street.

2. He was born in Chicago in 1907 and although he attended (sporadically) Lewis Institute, he hung out with the "Austin High gang" of early jazz enthusiasts; Jimmy McPartland, Bud Freeman, Frank Teschemacher, etc.

3. He spent 1927–28 touring Europe with The New Yorkers orchestra playing in posh European watering holes. Edward, Prince of Wales, sometimes sat in on his drums. Speaking of Edward's drumming, our boy commented, "He might make a good king."

4. This drummer's career was marred by frequent absences due to alcohol abuse and leaders often deputized other sidemen to "babysit" him offstage to keep him from temptation

5. Musicians agree that his drumming behind their solos created "a magic carpet," in Pee Wee Erwin's words, which lifted their playing to heights they never achieved with others

6. During his career he played with Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and Woody Herman, whose bands often achieved their artistic peaks during his tenure in the drum chair.

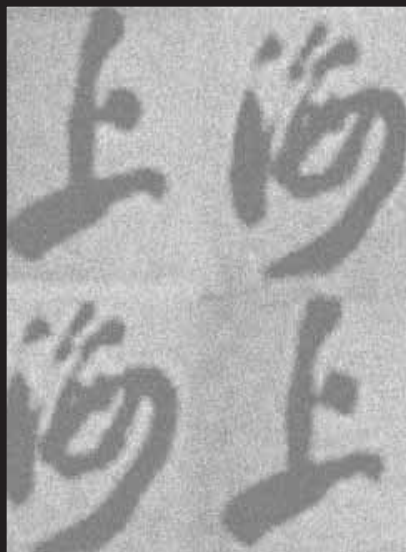
7. In 1942 Artie Shaw chose him for his WWII US Navy band, The Rangers. The examining physician questioned why Shaw wanted this 5'4", 100-pound, 35 year-old poor physical specimen for Navy service and Shaw replied "This is the world's best drummer."

8. In his final years this drummer was comfortable playing with traditionalists like Eddie Condon as well as modernists like Charlie Ventura.

9. His final residence was 35 Chester Avenue in Newark, where he lived with his wife, Casey.

answers on page 57

Howie also welcomes suggestions for future questions — or any comments from readers. Contact him at jazztrivia@njjs.org.



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Highlights, end of November, December 2008:

thu 11/20: HOWARD ALDEN

fri 11/21: ROB PAPAROZZI

sun 11/23: ERIC COMSTOCK

tue 11/25: EMMET COHEN

fri & sat

11/28 & 29: STEVE TURRE

sun 11/30: CHRISTINE PEDI CHRISTMAS SHOW

thu 12/11: MORRIS NANTON

fri 12/12: ROB PAPAROZZI

sun 12/21: JOHN PIZZARELLI (by reservation only)

wed 12/31: TONY DESARE (by reservation only)

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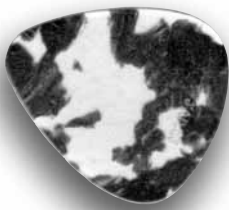
Wednesday and Thursday: 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM

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Sunday: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

**for latest schedules and updates,
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Please note: We take reservations by telephone only 973.822.2899 and not by e-mail.



The Editor's Pick

By **Tony Mottola** *Jersey Jazz* Editor

A Quirk in our Quark



Anita Fresolone, Marketing Director of Palmer Square Management and NJJS President Emeritus Jack Stine at JazzFeast in Princeton.

Sharp-eyed *Jersey Jazz* readers may have noticed that the same photograph of the amiable woodwind player Bob Ackerman popped up twice in our November issue. First there was Bob on page 27, accompanying his wife Pam Purvis on the flute at Cecil's in West Orange, and then the same shot showed up again atop an array of photos of JazzFeast in Princeton on page

38. That spot had been reserved for the above photo of JazzFeast organizer Anita Fresolone and the event's musical producer, Jack Stine. The unfortunate photo switch occurred when the publication went to press due to a peculiarity with the QuarkXPress software used to create *Jersey Jazz*.

Unfortunately, we have no software issue to blame for our "bebep" reference in a Generations of Jazz notice on page 2 of the same issue. We're just simply overworked!



Like this issue of *Jersey Jazz*? Have it delivered right to your mailbox 11 times a year. Simply join NJJS and get your subscription. See page 55 for details or visit www.njjs.org.



WRITERS WANTED: We are seeking more coverage of local jazz events, in all regions of the state. If you go to a jazz show anywhere in Jersey, send us a paragraph or two about your experience: where you went, when you were there, musicians you heard, jazzy people you met. Doesn't have to be academic, shouldn't be long, no need to include every song. If you can E-mail a snapshot to flesh it out, great! Please send to editor@njjs.org. We may publish at our discretion as space permits.

Advertising Rates Quarter page: \$50; Half page \$75; Full page \$100. **NEW! Biz card size: \$25!** 10% discount on repeat ads. To place an ad, please send payment from www.PayPal.com using our code: payment@njjs.org, or mail a check payable to **NJJS** to New Jersey Jazz Society, 274 Jackson Pines Rd, Jackson, NJ 08527; please indicate size and issue. Contact art@njjs.org or 201-306-2769 for technical information and to submit ads.

NJJS Deadlines The deadline for submission of material for upcoming issues is as follows:
January 2009 issue: November 26, 2008 • February issue: December 26, 2008

NOTE: EARLY SUBMISSIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

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Notes from the Music Committee

By **Joe Lang** NJJS Music Committee Chair

This month I have a potpourri of activities to discuss.

■ Mark your calendars to be at **Shanghai Jazz in Madison on Sunday December 7 for the NJJS Annual Meeting**. The social time starts at 2 PM with two one-hour sets of music from the James L. Dean Quartet starting at 2:30 PM. Between the sets, from 3:30–4:00 PM, we'll have the business portion of the afternoon. All members are invited to attend. A cash bar will be available, as will a selection of CDs from our NJJS inventory.

■ **Our November 23 Member Meeting** will feature bassist Jon Burr. Jon has a long list of credits with the likes of Stephane Grappelli, Chet Baker, Hank Jones and Tony Bennett. He is also a fine composer. Jon will hip us to his life in jazz.

The program will run from 3–5 PM, and will be preceded by a social hour from 2–3 PM. Trumpets will be having a brunch with live music that day from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM for \$20, plus tax and gratuity. Plan your day to include the delicious brunch and the program for what will be a lovely Sunday

afternoon. Please note that Trumpets is going to be charging a \$5 food and/or beverage minimum for those not partaking of the brunch. The meeting is still free to members of NJJS. There is a \$10 charge for guests attending the meeting, which can be applied to a NJJS membership if a non-member decides to join at the meeting. Please invite your friends to join in the fun.

■ The final film in our **Fall Film Series** "Talmage Farlow," was screened on November 18. This series has proven to be a popular addition to our lineup of events, and we look forward to having even more of you take advantage of this exciting and interesting series when it **resumes in February**. The dates have been set for next year's series, and they are February 25, March 25, April 22, May 27, September 23, October 28 and November 17. No title selections have yet been made. These dates are all the fourth Wednesday of the month, except for the date in November when the fourth Wednesday is Thanksgiving Eve. With this not being a practical option, we opted for the prior week, and, with the room being

unavailable on Wednesday during that week, it will be held on Tuesday. The films are presented at the Library of the Chathams, 214 Main Street in Chatham Boro, starting at 7 PM. There is no admission charge, and the programs are open to the general public. Time permitting we have a discussion following the showing of each film.

Both the Film Series and the Member Meetings are benefits of NJJS membership that have been added in recent years. They are wonderful opportunities to meet other NJJS members, and to enjoy jazz related programs that are entertaining, informative and free. We encourage all of our members to come out and enjoy these events. Why not also bring along other jazz enthusiasts, and familiarize them with NJJS!

■ **The Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp will take place at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany on Sunday March 1**, from Noon until 5 PM. The bands will be Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks plus groups led by Warren Vaché, Dan Levinson and

continued on page 54

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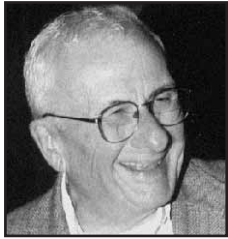


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Classic Stine

By Jack Stine

NJJS President Emeritus

Remembering Dave

Dave McKenna was a wonderful jazz pianist who left us on October 18, 2008.

Getting out of here had been a long, hard struggle for Dave and we were not totally unprepared for the news when it finally came down. Almost a decade ago we heard that he had been taken ill, nothing specific, and had to cancel the gigs he'd been committed to play. But people usually recover from such inconveniences, and we awaited news that Dave was back in harness, doing his thing as only he could.

But such news never came. Instead it got steadily worse. We heard that he couldn't use his hands at all. One visitor reported to us that Dave had become very despondent. "It feels like each hand is stuffed inside a loaf of bread," he said. Something had broken down in the chain of command to his fingertips, and so started the long, disheartening progress to the dreaded news of last October.

For NJJS members Dave McKenna's death could be counted as the loss of a good friend. Our association with him went back to our very inception when Bobby Hackett started bringing him to our concerts. I've lost count of how many times he played for us at Raritan Valley, Watchung View Inn, or Waterloo Village, but it's safe to say no single artist ever played more frequently. Very early on, seeing Dave on the bill was an occasion for backslapping, high fives, and exchanging riffs of pleasure. He always seemed to be "back home in New Jersey" as I've heard him put it more than once. Yes, we've lost a great artist who also happened to be a good friend, and it's not easy. Not easy at all.

Well, as has been said, people go, but memories live on. Who will ever forget the

image of Dave McKenna at the keyboard? He was a big guy, but he didn't crowd the instrument; he respected it, you might say, never pounded it or tried to take more from it than he put in. Recall the composure with which he laid everything out, nothing hidden or subject to dispute in a manner that was his alone. Recall also the unmistakably McKennan knack for producing the impression that there were three, not two, hands at work when he played. There was, of course, that walking bass line that was a kind of musical signature of his. Then, at the opposite end of the keyboard where fancy and possibility often wearied in the hands of less tasteful artists, McKenna rarely resorted to extravagance, thus sharing his audience's respect for melody over arabesque.

But in that precious span of a couple octaves that lay between his two thumbs, Dave McKenna went to work. It was as if a new player had joined the game and had assimilated and made one out of the melodic strands that had merely been implied at the keyboard's extremes. In shambles lay the old notion that the whole could never exceed the sum of its parts. Let's call it the McKennan Theorem.

"I'm only a saloon pianist, nothing more," Dave McKenna often said to his friends. I think this says more about Dave's modesty than it does about saloon ticklers, of which you have to believe, I know very little. I do know something, however, about his decency toward others in the trade. One evening Audrey and I were in Boston and stopped at the Copley Plaza where Dave and Sammy Price could dependably be found, trading sets. Asked what we were doing in town, I told Dave I'd come up to see if I could persuade Bob Winter (then pianist with the Boston Pops Orchestra whose

Very early on, seeing Dave on the bill was an occasion for backslapping, high fives, and exchanging riffs of pleasure.

occasional duo appearances with conductor John Williams had caused something of a stir in New England jazz circles) to come down and play in my Raritan Valley Series. Dave was immediately enthusiastic. "He's a wonderful player and if you can get him, they'll love him in Jersey. You tell him I said he should make that gig." I took the message to Bob and it became the first of many times he soloed for NJJS fans.

One other thing about Dave McKenna, like most all New Englanders I ever knew he was a diehard Red Sox fan. (In this connection I recall his constant reference to Ted Williams, his hero of all Red Sox players, simply as "Nine," the great outfielder's uniform number) We know the final years for Dave were not easy, but at least he lived to see the end of the Bambino's Revenge as the Sox took the World Series Title in 2004 and 2007. It took almost a century to happen but I'm sure Dave found it worth the wait.

Dave McKenna was one of those rare ones who come along, do their thing, stay a while, and leave things better than they found them. I think he'd have been happy to know that this is how we'll be remembering him. And we'll be thinking of him often.



Big Band in the Sky



■ **William James Claxton, 80, photographer, Pasadena, CA, October 12, 1927 – Los Angeles, CA, October 11, 2008.**

William Claxton, an exceptional photographer whose often outdoor instead of smoky-room images of West Coast musicians and visiting luminaries filled record jackets, magazines, books and galleries in America and Europe, caught the spirit of jazz from the mid-20th century onward. He was 80, and died October 12 of congestive heart failure, in Los Angeles.

“If musicians like Art Pepper, Shorty Rogers and Chet Baker helped define what West

Coast jazz sounded like, Claxton was someone who helped define what it looked like,” *Jersey Jazz* contributing photo editor Mitchell Seidel wrote in a 1993 *Star-Ledger* column.

Claxton liked to call photography “jazz for the eyes.” He said both music making and picture taking depend on improvisation and spontaneity. A shot of Chet Baker first brought the trumpeter-singer as well as the photographer to public attention. Claxton was struck with Baker’s handsome features when the print took form in the developing tray. “My God, that’s what photogenic

“I’ve always felt that the ultimate honor a musician can bestow is to name a tune after you. Witness Shorty Rogers’s ‘Clickin’ with Clax.’”

— Mitchell Seidel

means!” he exclaimed decades later, in a CBS interview. The image has been seen around the world.

So have the many books by Claxton, often with collaborators. A turning point in his early career was touring America in 1959 with a leading German musicologist, Joachim Ernst Berendt. This eventually led to the anniversary edition of *William Claxton: Jazzlife*, with editors Berendt and Viktoria Haussman. Published in 2006, new hardcover copies of the enormous volume still retail at \$1,500.

There was little money in jazz photos when Claxton and his eminent East Coast contemporaries, William Gottlieb and Herman Leonard, started out after World War II. While the Californian shot and designed more than one LP jacket a week for Pacific Jazz Records, it was mostly a labor of love for both the medium and the music. However, Claxton also sold and exhibited his intimate images of idols like the publicity-shy Steve McQueen and the insulated Frank Sinatra, after winning their trust with his empathy and promise to focus on the positive. He delighted viewers with his often-outdoor images of Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, Billie Holiday and Sonny Rollins when they played for California audiences.

Mitchell Seidel, who reviewed the show at Whitkin Gallery on West Broadway, Manhattan, called Claxton’s exhibition prints “something of a revelation, because they display a tonal range not possible” on reproduced record jackets or in books and

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William Claxton, Fahey-Klein Gallery 1998 ©Chris Lee/CTS IMAGES



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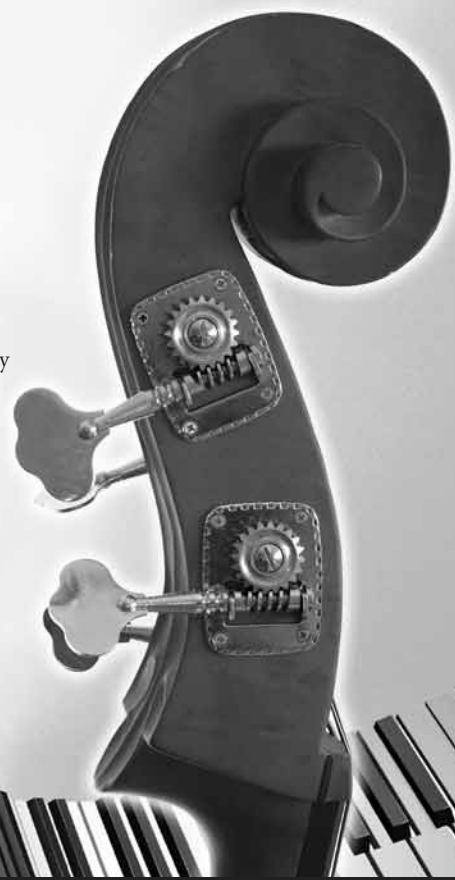
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BIG BAND IN THE SKY *continued from page 10*

magazines. Seidel's descriptions of pictures at the exhibition convey the lensman's style: "Ray Charles is viewed from above, so you can just see his hands on the keyboard. Another shot, . . . of drummers Philly Joe Jones and Lawrence Marable, has them lying on the floor, framed between a stool and a drum set. They look up at an unknown leader, who is represented by a curl of cigarette smoke and pair of arms leaning on the seat." Saxophonist Art Pepper is "walking up a steep hill. The Los Angeles landscape stretches out behind him, helped by the perspective of Claxton's telephoto lens. But in all the versions...in books or on records, you never see much of the hazy hillside in the background." The photograph at the Whitkin showed it "in great detail," wrote Seidel, himself an exhibited jazz photographer.

Prickly personalities

Claxton majored in psychology at the University of California. He thought that having a laid-back attitude helped with some prickly personalities he had to photograph. The celebrities included the actors George C. Scott, Marlene Dietrich, Marilyn Monroe, Natalie Wood, Barbra Streisand and galleon jazz singer Anita O'Day. He won over Steve McQueen by comparing the actor's Ferrari with Claxton's Porsche in the studio parking lot. He then handed McQueen his camera and had him focus on Claxton, so he could feel the thrill of picture taking.

Their friendship yielded a book, *Steve McQueen: Photographs by William Claxton*, with the actor racing cars and enjoying other pleasures. "One time when I was with him," the author recalled, "he drove a brand new Ford convertible, with only thirty miles on the speedometer, at top speed for such a long stretch of the Texas highway that the engine began to smoke and eventually caught on fire. He slowed down and shouted to me, 'Clax, when I tell you to jump, jump!' We did jump out of the car just as it burst into flames. Steve sat on the side of the country road at a safe distance from the burning vehicle and laughed his head off."

Like many professional photographers, Claxton began as a boy with a Brownie box camera. He loved listening to his father's big-band records and, according to *The New York Times* obituary, soon was "haunting jazz clubs in Los Angeles, wearing one of his father's suits to avoid being asked for an ID, and always carrying a camera." He married the fashion model Peggy Moffitt. Ms. Claxton agreed to have her picture taken in the "first topless swimsuit," but only if her husband were behind the camera. He is survived by Ms. Claxton of Beverly Hills, and a son in Los Angeles. —fG

■ **Neal Hefti, 85, trumpeter, composer, bandleader, Oct. 29, 1922, Hastings, NE – Oct. 11, 2008, Los Angeles.** Playing the trumpet (his first instrument was a Christmas gift at age 10) was Neal Hefti's ticket out of the Depression-ravaged Nebraska of the 1930s, but it was his gift for composing and arranging music that led him to fame and fortune. And while Hefti is revered in the jazz world for his deceptively simple and transformative writing, notably for the Woody Herman and Count Basie bands, he is most famous for the iconic music he wrote for television and film scores in his career's second half.

He was tutored by his music teacher mother as early as age three, including piano lessons and instruction in musical theory and harmony. Listening to the radio, and his brother's Duke Ellington records, he taught himself to arrange music well enough to sell his charts to local dance bands while still in high school. By the early 1940s Hefti was in New York playing trumpet in the bands of Charlie Barnet and Bobby Byrnes. Later he joined the Charlie Spivak band and moved with it to Los Angeles.

It was in L.A. that Hefti joined the Woody Herman band and met his wife, Frances Wayne, who was the band's singer. Sharing arranging chores with the band's pianist, Ralph Burns, the pair gave the Herd a progressive sound influenced by the emerging style of bebop. Stocked with star players, the Herman outfit became one of the best bands of the time and Hefti charts such as "Apple Honey," "Wild Root" and

"Blowin' Up a Storm," defined their signature sound.

Hefti and Wayne were married in 1945 and left the band a year later. While he went on for a while to tour with Harry James and his own bands, sometimes with his wife, he began writing more often and eventually abandoned playing the trumpet.

Hefti settled in as a studio arranger and conductor in New York. "Whatever the studios wanted me to do, I learned how," he said. "I did big bands, vocal doo-wahs, pop artists, catalogue music. I loved it all."

He did albums with artists like Clifford Brown, Coleman Hawkins, and Charlie Parker (for whom he wrote "Repetition"), but the apogee of his jazz writing is undoubtedly the work he did for Count Basie. He first wrote for the leader's scaled-back octet in 1949 and when the full orchestra was restored he became a primary contributor to the band's book, creating a new modern Basie sound that would become world famous. Hefti wrote some 60 charts for Basie over the years including the so-called *Atomic Basie*. Widely regarded as a masterpiece, the 1958 LP featured a cover of questionable taste (a nuclear explosion's mushroom cloud) and 11 unquestionably swinging Hefti originals, including "The Kid from Red Bank," "Whirly Bird," "Splanky" and the sweetly beautiful "Li'l Darlin'."

During a brief stint at Reprise Records Hefti also produced and arranged two LPs for Frank Sinatra, the classic *Sinatra-Basie* and *Sinatra and Swinging Brass* (which he also conducted).

Starting in the 1960s Hefti found great success scoring many popular films. His credits include *Sex and the Single Girl* (which yielded the hits "Girl Talk" and "Lonely Girl"), *How to Murder Your Wife*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* and *The Odd Couple*, whose theme was later reprised for the popular TV sitcom based on the film.

Hefti's most famous composition — the campy theme to the mid-'60s TV pop culture sensation *Batman* — is like the best of Hefti's work, a lot trickier than it sounds.

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BIG BAND IN THE SKY *continued from page 12*



Pianist Dave McKenna at a rehearsal for a Newport-New York Jazz Festival concert in June 1979. Photo by Mitchell Seidel.

The simple repetitive melody with its electric guitar hook and one-word lyric was a struggle to write. “I tore up a lot of paper,” Hefti told Jon Burlingame, author of *TV’s Biggest Hits*, a 1996 book on television themes. “It did not come easy to me...I just sweated over that thing, more so than any other single piece of music I ever wrote. I was never satisfied with it.”

The rest of the world, however, seemed more than satisfied. Recordings of the tune by Hefti himself and a group called the Marketts were both 1966 Top 40 hits and the theme earned a Grammy Award, along with a lasting place in American pop culture history.

Hefti retired from writing and recording music after his wife’s death in 1978.

— *Tony Mottola*

■ **Dave McKenna, 78, pianist, May 30, 1930, Woonsocket, RI – Oct. 18, 2008, State College, PA.** It’s likely that pianist Dave McKenna would be more widely known had he not chosen to spend so much time on old Cape Cod, where he moved to raise his two sons in 1966 and performed regularly until ill health intervened several

years ago. But, no matter that Mr. McKenna rarely ventured much further than Boston and New York, he was widely regarded as one of the best. Steve Voce, writing an obituary in *The Independent of London*, said: “Dave McKenna was rightly regarded as one of the finest jazz piano soloists of the late 20th century.”

The self-effacing McKenna’s own appraisal was more modest. “I don’t know if I qualify as a bona fide jazz guy,” he once offered. “I play saloon piano. I like to stay close to the melody.”

Indeed, “staying close,” with endlessly inventive musical embellishments and memorable melodic re-imaginings, along with a famously impressive left hand, earned him many admirers among his musical peers. Singer Tony Bennett, for one, always made a point of seeking out McKenna. “When Tony Bennett played the Melody Tent he’d take extra time to see my dad at the East Bay Lodge (in Osterville),” the pianist’s son Douglass told the *Cape Cod Times*. “It was an unbelievable treat for people because they’d walk in and there was Tony Bennett singing with my dad.”

His father was a mail carrier who played drums on the side and his mother, a violinist, gave him his first piano lessons. But McKenna was mainly self-taught, imitating the music he heard on the radio, in particular the early records of Nat King Cole. He played with local Boston groups as a teenager and then played in the Charlie Ventura and Woody Herman

big bands. After a stint in the U.S. Army he worked with Stan Getz and other top players, and also began a long association with traditional jazz greats Bobby Hackett and Bob Wilbur.

The singer/pianist Daryl Sherman fondly recalled McKenna as a primary mentor and family friend in her recent presentation to NJJS members at Trumpets in Montclair. In an E-mail on the night of McKenna’s passing she wrote admiringly of her modest and talented friend.

“Just two bars from Dave and he was immediately inside the song. His unique rhythmic thrust that sounded as if three hands were at work was a trademark of this world-class piano stylist. But he also could caress a melody in a way that sounded as if he were singing just to you. Dave had an innate sense of just the right harmony to enrich a song without diminishing its integrity.”

Dave McKenna leaves a large catalogue of fine recordings, both as a leader and soloist, many available on the Concord, Arbors and Chiaroscuro labels.

— *Tony Mottola*



When the final story about the New Jersey Jazz Society is written, it's conceivable that Shirley Klinger's name will not even be mentioned. That's because she was one of those rare individuals who did what she did without expecting either help or thanks, whose entrances and exits were without fanfare or advertisement. Yet services she performed for the NJJS behind the scenes and out of sight were beyond praise. You have my word that most of us up front were a pretty makeshift bunch concerned mainly with the visibilities that go with performances and arrangements. I think we did pretty well, but as we grew, so did the necessities of keeping records, maintaining membership and mailing lists, things like that. And this is where Shirley proved her worth. To say we could not have done without her would not be stretching things very much.

If I may add a personal note, I'd like to point out that I first knew her as Shirley Haskard in Plainfield High School as long ago as the mid '30s, the era when boys rolled up their trouser cuffs and girls wore their cardigans buttoned up the back. Saddle shoes were uni-sex, and big bands were all the rage. "Going steady" was the ideal and

Remembering Shirley Klinger



By Jack Stine
NJJS President Emeritus

Shirley and Mike Klinger, another classmate, were among the first to try it out. They were both nuts about the 78s of Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey and Count Basie and it developed that they were also nuts about each other. The love of music and the love for each other lasted right up to Mike's death in 1973.

I like to think that maybe it was the Jazz Society that helped Shirley over the loss of her husband. Or maybe it was simply the music we brought into her life. All I know is that we needed her as much as, presumably, she needed us. It worked both ways.

Bruce Gast E-mailed the news of Shirley's death to us at the NJJS. She had been ill for some time and died quietly, as she did everything in life, while listening to jazz on the radio. She had wished that there be no ceremony or even a notice in the newspaper, but this is a family matter, and our membership should know of our loss. If this is an indiscretion, Shirley, please forgive.

Bruce closed his message with, "Hopefully, there's a lot of hot jazz where she is now."

Amen.

JJ



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Talking Jazz

A Jersey Jazz Interview with Stefon Harris

By Schaen Fox

When we entered Red Bank's Count Basie Theater on December 4, 2004 four instruments rested alone on the stage: piano, vibes, bass and drums. I immediately had memories of the MJQ but this was an all too rare date for the Classical Jazz Quartet of Ron Carter, Kenny Barron, Lewis Nash and Stefon Harris. The latter is another vibrant and thoughtful jazz musician who lives in New Jersey but performs worldwide. As a child, he developed an early focus on music and showed exceptional talent. In the few years he has been on the scene, Mr. Harris has produced a significant discography, garnered an impressive list of awards and award nominations, and performed and recorded with many other leading musicians. He holds your attention both by his commanding stage presence and musical ideas. He is clearly a musician who enjoys the creative spontaneity that is so much of the essence of jazz. This interview comes from several pleasant conversations we had in February and March of this year.

JJ: I have a few questions about your recordings, especially *African Tarantella*. Is that you on the cover?

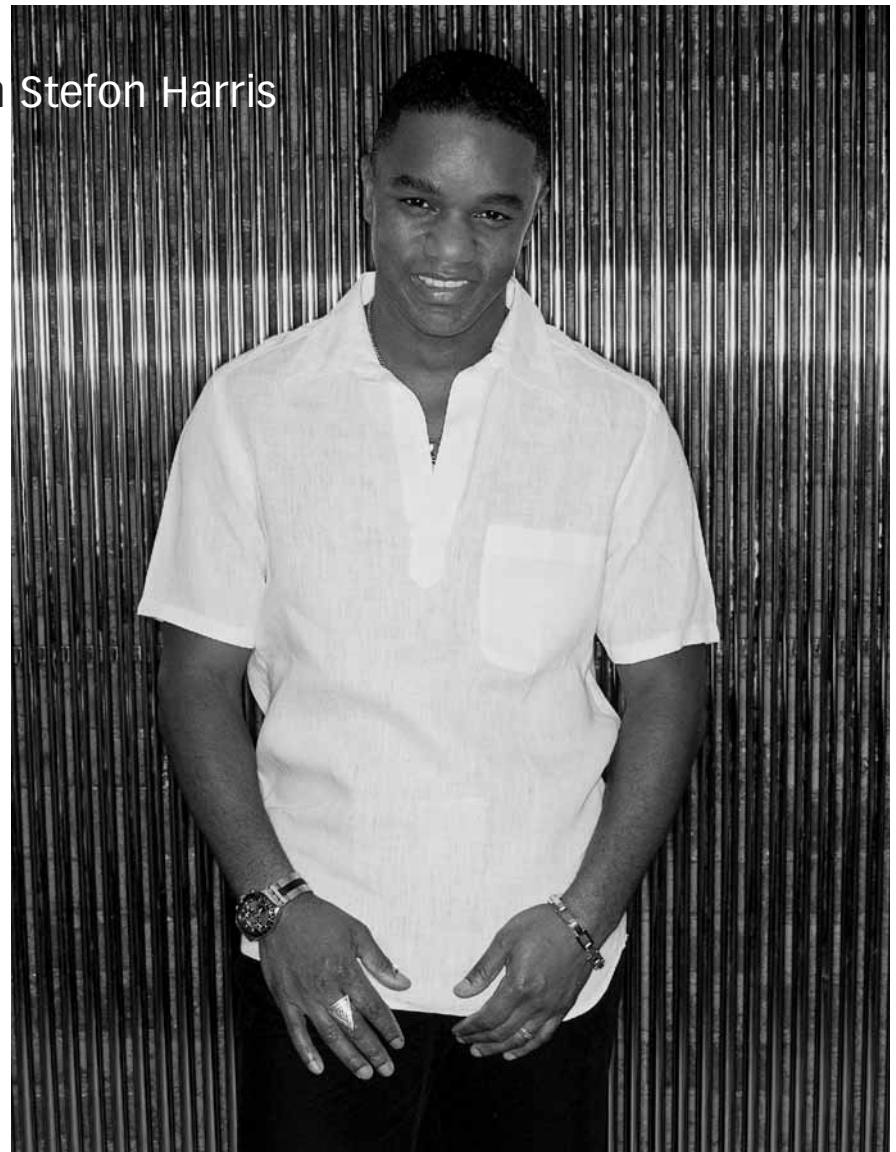
SH: Yes that's me.

JJ: OK, then was the spider alive?

SH: No, the spider was real but not alive. They got it from a movie studio in New York City.

JJ: Then did you give any thought to losing sales to all jazz fans with arachnophobia?

SH: [Laughs] That's interesting. There was a discussion about that at the record company. Ultimately I felt that the fact that we had a lot of discussion about the record cover was a good thing. What I don't want to do is put out a safe standard image that no one talks about, because then they ignore it. I'm always looking for something that's striking. And if there is a group of people that say, "Ugh, I don't like that." That's good, because then they noticed it. [Chuckles] So, for all of my record covers I try to go for something that will make someone stop. I hope you will like the cover, but what I need is for you to recognize it and to stop for a second. If you are walking through a store, and not too



Photos courtesy of the artist.

many people go through CD stores anymore, but if they were, you want people to walk past something and it catches their eye, just for a split second and maybe they stop and say, "What is that?" and pick it up. So imagining is extremely important in terms of making the first connection to a potential consumer.

JJ: When I first saw your *A Cloud of Red Dust* CD, I was interested to see the

term "Red Dust" as it is one from Chinese Buddhism. Is that philosophy any interest to you?

SH: Yeah, I studied Buddhism. I don't necessarily call myself a Buddhist, but I read and do some meditation. I think philosophically a lot of the tenets in Buddhism help and connect very well with jazz. It is not surprising to me that there are a lot of jazz musicians who are Buddhist. Many of the

musicians I've worked with are Buddhist; look at Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Steve Turre and Buster Williams. You know what it is? It's the ability to let go and not control a situation, and get outside your ego, which is such an important part of jazz. To really get outside of what you want to do in a given moment so that you can really focus on what the music wants to do. That is

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STEFON HARRIS

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a difficult thing. For me, I actually meditate before I play to get out of that mindset of thinking about what I want to do. It's just really getting my ears open. So I find it very effective and I see a very direct connection between the two.

JJ: I was also impressed with your cover for *Grand Unification Theory*.

SH: That was an exciting shoot. I was literally underwater to make that record cover. I had to stick my head into a fish tank as the photographer was taking pictures through the tank. I'd be underwater for maybe 30 seconds at a time and you have to do that for maybe 10 or 15 times or so. [Chuckles] But a photo shoot is something that takes all day. You're shooting several scenes, you're not only shooting the cover, and you're shooting all the publicity shots that will be used throughout the year.

JJ: Do you give much thought to the sequence of the numbers on your CDs?

SH: Absolutely. I'm in full control of the overall CD, and I do spend a lot of time thinking about the sequence of songs because I look at a CD as an emotional journey for the consumer. I'm hoping that they are going to sit down and listen to it from beginning to end, even though I know that today's consumer doesn't necessarily buy and listen to music that way. Often people are just buying single tracks now, so that's changed, but in the craft of making a solid CD, I consider the emotional journey from beginning to end. For example I'm very conscious not to have a really, really soft subtle tone followed by something jarring because it is sort of emotionally disturbing to the consumer and you don't really want that. There are moments though when I do want to have that effect so I consciously choose to use that approach.

JJ: I was quite surprised when I read some reviews of *African Tarantella* that said your Ellington selections were little known as they are among my favorites by Duke.



SH: I think a lot of his suite writing is not well known. I suppose it's possibly because of radio air play, maybe it's difficult to perform an entire suite on radio, I don't know. I think the *Queen's Suite* is better known than the *New Orleans Suite*, but the *New Orleans Suite* is not very common and it's one of my favorite works of Duke Ellington because I think it's one of his most modern sounding works. It sounds like it was written just a couple of weeks ago. And, searching through all the different suites that he had, I just felt the right connection to it. I could really hear a bit of myself and the other musicians that work with me in that music. So it wasn't a great leap when we played the music, we didn't have to play in the style to capture an era. In fact one thing we were conscious of was not to listen to the Ellington stuff. I listened to it because I arranged it all, but I told the musicians "Don't listen to it. Here's the chart, whatever you come up with, that's fine." We were not trying to recreate a style or anything from the past or anything like that.

JJ: That reminds me that Frank Vignola got a laugh recently when he told a crowd that after he played "Stardust" several young people asked if he wrote it.

SH: [Laughs] Well that's interesting. That's a sign of changing generations and it brings into question the relevance of a song like "Stardust." I think it is an extremely beautiful song and any song that's beautiful and moves you, you should perform. But not in terms of choosing a song because you think an audience is going to like it because it's a so-called standard. That's going to change over time. There's going to be more people in the audience who have never heard "Stardust" and they are not going to recognize it. The motivation might be that you choose music from more recent times because the audience will be better able to relate to that.

The real test of great music is its relevance now I think. So the question is, "Were they moved?" If they liked it, then it's great. If they couldn't relate to it, then it's not an effective piece that you're performing. In fact, I really don't play a lot of older standards. I know some and there are settings and times when we might

spontaneously go into a standard, but I'm looking to play music that is indicative of our modern culture that sounds like New Jersey [laughs] in this time period.

JJ: Since you mentioned New Jersey, what attracted you to Sayreville?

SH: More space [laughs] for my home and it's a great location in terms of all the highways that intersect right there. I can get to Philadelphia in about an hour and 15 minutes. I can get to Princeton. We go down there often because there are lots of incredible restaurants in Princeton. I'm close to New York. It takes me about 35 minutes to get to the Newark airport. I'm close to the shore. It's an incredible location, so I really love living there.

JJ: Looking at your CDs I see you've used a lot of New Jersey musicians such as Steve Turre, Xavier Davis and Derrick Hodge. Would that be because they are neighbors or is it just an accidental professional relationship?

SH: [Laughs.] Well no, but we are all fairly close to each other. I think with music it is never just a professional relationship. When you are on the bandstand with someone there is so much of an emotional exchange that occurs that you really get to know the people you work with. Even when you are working with someone for the first time, when you are really committed emotionally to what you are doing, it goes beyond a professional relationship. But, my relationship with Steve Turre goes back a long way. He was on the committee that I auditioned for to get into graduate school [laughs] and he was one of the people who fought for me to get a scholarship. So I always say that I owe Steve Turre some money. And I played on several of his records and he's played on several of mine.

One of the reasons I love Steve as an improviser is I'm always looking for individuals. I don't want a group of musicians on the bandstand who all play in a similar style. I don't want the bandstand full of bop musicians because I think it is redundant and will become boring for me as a musician and boring for the audience. So if you look at some of my records, you notice I'll have a Steve Turre, but I'll also have a Greg Osby next to a Steve Turre, two people that you might never see together on a bandstand in a typical situation. But for me Greg has a unique story and Steve has a unique story and when I improvise my story is very different from theirs and I think that keeps the momentum in the music.

JJ: You have done your share of playing on other's projects. One I've been listening to

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STEFON HARRIS

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recently is Janet Segal's *Sketches of Broadway* CD. Is it still the norm for the musicians to get together, or is it trickling in solo, putting on headphones and adding something to a track?

SH: I have done sessions where you sort of trickle in, but most sessions are still done where all the musicians are present in the studio at the same time. Because there is a certain magic that happens when everyone's together and you're directly reacting to each other. Many times if you're recording at separate times the track will sound more sterile; like the drummer will only play very straight and everything will sound perfect and will lack that organic magic that really makes this music special.

Actually, nowadays the technology is so good that many people aren't even coming into the studio. They can tap into the recordings online or even through phone lines and record their part in L. A. and another person is recording in London. It's pretty scary! [Laughs] But, I think we will always have a place in our hearts and our society for live music and that the recording process will always be special when it captures the live element. Because the live element is really and truly a reflection of our hopes and dreams as a society; it's really a reflection of our relationships, of the diverse populations that exist here and how we can all relate to one another and express a common beauty. When you start to chop it up and it becomes very sterile, you actually lose the interaction. It's just that you're stacking one culture on top of another, but they're not really communicating necessarily. So that is why I have total confidence in live music, because that's a reflection of a much deeper truth.

JJ: I loved the way you announced that your set at Dizzy's Club Coke Cola would be unstructured and how when you are in a school situation you don't talk to the students about what you will do, you just start doing it. That to me is part of the essence of jazz.

SH: I think what you are just talking about is fundamental to music. Ultimately the most important skill you need as a musician is the ability to listen. The ability to play fast or interesting licks or even play in tune is secondary to a musician's ability to hear. [Chuckles] So the best way to challenge someone or to really see where someone is in



terms of the way they hear is to not tell them what's going on. So if you just start, they can't rely on a set of chords that they've practiced already and if they have those chords in front of them they can just play those no matter what you're playing. If you keep a certain level of freedom in your music, which I think is absolutely essential in jazz, everyone is forced to listen to each other. Of course that translates very well when you are working with kids because it's talking about respecting other people around you and the ability to listen to each other and respond. So there are a lot of intrinsic messages that I think are hidden inside this art form.

JJ: I can picture Duke sitting nearby and nodding sagely.

SH: I don't know, if Duke were sitting next to me, I don't think I would say anything.

JJ: I read that your interest in music started when your family moved into an apartment and you discovered an abandoned piano there.

SH: I think I would have been a musician anyway. I loved music even before we moved into that apartment. I remember being a kid and watching cartoons. I would never pay attention to what was going on in the cartoon, I would just listen to the music and I could sit and listen to record albums all day long. I always loved setting up pots and pans and beating out rhythms. [Laughs] Just everything about music always fascinated me.

JJ: Were your parents supportive of your interest in music?

SH: Actually I think I was fairly independent when it came to music. My mother is a Pentecostal minister so she comes from a very fundamentalist background. So, music didn't really play too well in that setting. [Chuckles] I grew up hearing gospel and some R&B and I listened to music on my own. So playing jazz or other styles of music is something that I kind of pushed myself to do. I had a private teacher, Richard Abagli, who was very supportive. Now that's a pivotal point in my life, meeting him and having him as a mentor. I was a kid with very, very unfocused talent. In fact before I met Richard, I played about 20 different instruments. When they needed someone to play trombone in the band, they would call me. If they needed someone to play bassoon, they would say, "Well here's a bassoon, go work on the bassoon." So, I had talent, but it was totally unfocused. When I met Richard he was able to help me and figure out how not to be a jack of all trades and master of none.

JJ: I read that at first you reduced the number of instruments to clarinet and percussion. Do you still play clarinet?

SH: No, at this point I just play percussion. I still play piano. In fact most of the composing and, I'd say 95% of my practicing is at the piano, not at the vibraphone at all. I rarely practice the vibraphone because ultimately these instruments are very secondary to the process. It's just a bunch of metal and wood. If you notice, I rarely talk about the vibraphone; I don't think it's very important. I like it. It's a cool instrument, but what's important is the story the musician is telling. So for me, it's more effective to sit and study at a piano, because I have 10 fingers and can hear more of the chords and study the harmony better that way.

JJ: I read that you joined the Empire State Youth Orchestra in the eighth grade. How important was that for you?

SH: That was a fantastic experience. I participated in that for five years. When I was 15 years old I was able to travel Europe as a concert soloist with the orchestra. Just to get out and see other parts of the world and meet interesting people totally different than the people I grew up with was great. It just gave me a much broader perspective on life in terms of opportunities that were right there in front of me. That's why sometimes I'll say that music saved my life in many ways. It really opened up my world in a way that I could never have imagined. It created unbelievable opportunities.

JJ: Yeah, I'm so sorry about schools dropping the arts and music programs.

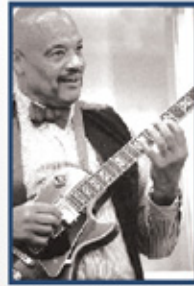
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STEFON HARRIS

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I suspect there may be something of a link to that and the accelerated decline in the popularity of jazz.

SH: Interesting. I think the overall decline of jazz in popular culture happened a long time ago when jazz stopped being dance music. So ultimately the more that an audience is able to participate in an art form the more popular an art form is going to be. [Chuckles] So these pop concerts are great because they're not just about the music. People buy new outfits and get all dressed up and they get 20 of their buddies to go there and it's a giant party for them. It's much more than just about the music. [Chuckles] Guys go to meet girls, whereas jazz concerts stopped being that a long time ago. So it's not a bad thing actually. I'm not even sure if I would be a jazz musician if it were pop music. There's a certain freedom that we have because we are able to focus on the art itself that you don't always get the opportunity to do in pop music.

JJ: That reminds me, when someone was asked why he became a jazz musician he said he had a fear of crowds.

SH: [Laughs] Oh, that's terrible. That's terrible. Wow! Well you know in terms of the schools, it's really too bad that we're losing a lot of music programs. There are so many incredible parallels to math. In fact it seems to me that the way we are teaching in our schools is that we are dividing all these disciplines up into small little categories and we don't really see the thing that unites them. Ultimately music is a direct expression of mathematics. The overtone series and the whole notation of rhythm are based on division and multiplication. You can literally take the blueprint of a building and translate that into a piece of music. But, it's not really taught that way, so people don't necessarily see the value of music in a lot of ways.

I also think there is a great emotional value in art for children. A kid who grows up in a really callous environment, maybe there are gangs or any type of horrible things going on, and he's not able to express a sensitive side of himself, right? But you take the same kid and bring him to school, put a clarinet in his hand and ask him to play a piece by Mozart and to be really effective you really have to



be able to draw something of emotional sensitivity. So to be a great musician you're exploring parts of yourself that you may not have the opportunity to explore in a deeper way in other elements of society. You'll see with kids who participate in music programs versus those who don't, those who participate tend to be much, much more expressive and do better in science and math as well. I mean there needs to be a new movement where we are going to have to really talk more

about the extrinsic value of art. We can't only talk about art for the sake of art itself, even though I think that's important. But, I think drawing parallels to physics could prove to be very interesting. For example, maybe it makes the math class that much more interesting for the students in math when they are studying algebra. We can translate some of those algebraic equations into a piece of music. [Chuckles] Maybe they'd see the relevance of math and how it's expressed in architecture and in music and in the mechanics of how a car operates and it's not just this abstract study.

JJ: By the way, the high temperature here today will be 23 degrees. When I saw where you were today I thought you might like to hear that.

SH: [Laughs] With the wind chill yesterday, I think it was 40 degrees below. Unbelievable, I'm actually on my way to San Francisco so it will be much warmer there I'm sure. That's one of the interesting things about being a musician, being on the road you end up in some really interesting towns. You meet all types of people and you end up in all types of climates. Before we were here we were in Cleveland and before that we were in Palm Beach, Florida. So we are going from hot to cold, hot to cold. I was sick about a week and a half ago, so it catches up to you.

JJ: Perhaps you need to have a serious talk with whoever sets up your schedule. Do you have any tips for others about to face the road?

SH: [Laughs] Well one of the things I do is, if I have some comforts from home that I want to bring with me, I bring them even if it means bringing an extra bag and packing heavy. [Laughs] So, sometimes you really work on packing light so you don't have to worry about carrying a heavy bag around with you, but it is really nice when you're on the road for a

while to have those little things. Also technology has made the road so much better. Now most of my CD collection is on my telephone. I used to have to pack CD bags and carry that around. A lot of my DVD collection is on my telephone because I have an iPhone I can connect to the television in the hotel room and watch movies. Sometimes when I go to Europe, I like to put a lot of TV programs on my phone, because if you're in a small town in Germany the only thing in English is CNN and it's only 20 minutes that's being looped again and again [laughs]. So things like that really help to make it feel like home. And technology like Skype is a great way to communicate with my wife at home over the Internet. You can see each other and talk, it's really great.

JJ: Yeah, but can any phone help get your laundry back on time?

SH: [Laughs] Yeah, laundry is always a challenge. No, I can't reveal my laundry secrets though. [Chuckles] Everyone has a different way of dealing with that.

JJ: With all the time you spend in the air, have any plane crews recognized you?

SH: Actually, yes on a flight or two.

JJ: About how much of the year do you spend traveling?

SH: I'd say...five months. I have actually developed a fairly strong career in the United States. There is this whole network of chamber music presenters that are finally, after many years, opening up to the idea of presenting jazz. Most universities have a concert hall affiliated with them. So now there is a network in the United States for many jazz musicians to actually play and have successful careers, which I think is fantastic. Jazz is really America's chamber music. It really is. Europeans may appreciate the music more. Sometimes when the music is created in your neighborhood you take it for granted [chuckles] and for someone else it's still fresh. They are seeing it for the first time. They may not understand it, so it's a little more exciting which I think is part of evolution. The fact that we get use to our music forces us to be creative and continue to make the music evolve. That's why jazz music is not stagnating.

JJ: Well, since you've mentioned Europe, do you have any places you especially like to see on your schedule?

SH: I really like Spain. I have a great time every time I go to Spain and Portugal. I speak some Spanish, so that's a big part of it. Anywhere that I go where I can continue to work on language is

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STEFON HARRIS

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exciting for me and the food is really important, so obviously I love going to Italy. [Chuckles] Just seeing the different pace of life in Europe is exciting. You can sit down to dinner for four hours and just relax and have great conversation and there are eight courses that come out. It is just a very different way of doing things than the way we do things.

I also love Japan. To go to a country where there is truly an ancient culture and interesting food, is unbelievable. Japan is funny because the audience will sit in absolute silence and then at the end you think, "Man I wonder if they liked it." and they jump to their feet and it's a standing ovation and loud applause. They want to be respectful. You know if you're playing Chicago, it's totally different. People will call out and, I don't know, they'll just participate more and both styles are effective. We actually play differently depending on the audience that we are playing to.

JJ: How many languages do you speak?

SH: Right now only English and a little Spanish. I'm working towards being fluent in Spanish. It takes quite a bit of time when you don't live where the language is spoken. I study it from time to time. At this point I feel comfortable saying I speak some Spanish. I'm also interested in moving on to another language. I was thinking about Japanese. That's just a beautiful language and for some reason it sounds very clear to my musical ear. It seems a little easier for me to pronounce than French, I don't know why.

Just sitting in airports when you are traveling abroad is fascinating sometimes to just listen to the rhythm and music in the spoken language, even if you don't understand the content. I think music is really a reflection of language as well as the larger culture. When you listen to the rhythmic nuance of a language you'll hear that reflected in the rhythm of the music from that region. If you think of Nigeria, the tone of voice and the sound of the languages spoken there is very deep [like] the sound of the drums they choose to use. Compare [that] to much of the music from Asia which may have more gongs or cymbal sounds, a little brighter, little pinging sounds. Their language is not so deep in the throat. When you listen to Spanish and how syncopated that is, the quick rhythmic subtleties that happen it's no surprise that there's an unbelievable amount of nuance in their rhythmic content musically. And it's pretty consistent too as you examine other languages, you'll hear a direct

connection to music. Ultimately music and art are just reflections of the larger culture. It's not the reality; it's a picture of the reality. I think it's a picture of our aspirations and hopes and dreams as a society.

JJ: I once heard an actress say that winning the Academy Award did not really change the number of calls she got for work. Does having a Grammy or Grammy nomination have a tangibly positive impact on a musician's career?

SH: I think that the Grammy can have an effect on your career. In fact I'm just finishing a tour with the Turtle Island String Quartet and they just won another Grammy. So they have two under their name and I'm sure that's going to have an impact on their ability to be booked for next season. That's just a story that they can tell to the consumer. Consumers hear that this is a group that's been nominated several times and they've won two awards, they must really be good. So there is a level of trust that you get from audiences initially. Now you have to play well in order to maintain that trust. You can tell someone that I have three Grammy nominations and if they don't know me they are more likely to say, "Oh he must be good." So I do think there is that type of effect.

JJ: I was impressed when I looked at the current lineup of the San Francisco Collective about how many of you are based here on the East Coast.

SH: [Laughs] Exactly. Yeah, you know that's a fantastic organization. I really only have positive and glowing things to say about that, it's really, I think, the modern day blueprint of how an institution can have a resident ensemble. The way we've done it in the past has been more modeled after classical music where you have a local orchestra, so most institutions think you need a local big band, but most big band music is not modern. You are playing music from another era. At a certain point, audiences are getting younger and they're going to need to hear music that they can directly relate to and big bands many times, it's a sound from another era. So the San Francisco Collective is really, really effective because it's a resident ensemble, but it's a grouping where we play modern music and it has a unique modern sound. So I get to contribute my own composition and feel completely involved in that organization whereas, sometimes with larger ensembles, like big bands, you find that you are more of a craftsman where you are there and you are playing parts and you are playing someone else's music. So as for me, it's not quite as artistically fulfilling. That's what they are

doing in San Francisco, kudos to that organization. It's an incredible band with Joe Lovano and really, really fantastic musicians.

JJ: What about the Classical Jazz Quartet?

SH: Oh, what an opportunity to work with musicians of that caliber. Every time we play, I'm on cloud nine [laughs] just to be on stage with those guys. It's an amazing energy to walk out on to the stage when they are announcing our names, before you ever get to the instrument. You know it's myself, Lewis Nash and then they announce Kenny Barron and Ron Carter and we are all walking out together. What more could I ask for than to be in such amazing presence? It's really incredible. When I'm standing backstage and I can look out and see my instrument set up and the mikes and all the wires, it's an amazing feeling like you're going home almost. It's such a beautiful space to stand in front of an instrument, even before you make a sound. Just the presence of an audience and the energy of what is about to happen, I smile every time I get on stage because I'm just so looking forward to playing.

One of the things that I really love of playing in that group is the level of patience. It doesn't have that hectic, frantic energy that a lot of younger musicians have. I love both, you know. Sometimes when you are playing with a group of younger musicians it's like you get thrown in the fire. You just have to go with the momentum and you have to keep up and it's this incredible energy and it's amazing. But, playing with that group, everyone seems to take their time and the music unfolds very slowly and there is a lot of space where you don't need to play. So it's been a great lesson for me to be in that type of environment as well as the others.

JJ: Who deserves the credit for forming the group?

SH: I think it came from the record company initially. They had an idea about wanting to document some classical music, but in a jazz manner, and we just got a couple of phone calls. All they had to say to me was the line-up; of course I'd like to be a part of that. Once [we] got together, there was no space for ideas; it was all about the magic that occurs naturally. You know once the chemistry is there, then you can talk. If the chemistry is not there, it doesn't matter how great your ideas are. So once we got together and did the first couple of rehearsals and the blend was there, it was easy from that point forward. It's just a matter of patience and time.

JJ: I read that your interest in jazz really began while you were in college. Was that

the result of hearing recordings or hearing live performances?

SH: Well, a combination of both. One recording was Charlie Parker's *Now's the Time*. That was a record that I played all day when I was in college. And there was a Cannonball Adderley record that I used to love called *Things Are Getting Better* which had Milt Jackson on it. And those records, I just wore them out. I fell in love with the spiritual liberation that you could hear in these musicians. It sounded like they could go wherever they wanted to go at any given moment. I was at Eastman at the time and there were other kids who played jazz and I would ask them questions and they started to explain what was required to play jazz. They would show me how Charlie Parker would play this lick, and did you notice how Max Roach played something and now how Charlie Parker responds. So the guy's in control and he's paying attention to everything that's going on. So there's this great intellectual challenge that was there for me as well. I really fell in love with it on every level.

JJ: Did any of those kids from Eastman go on to successful careers in jazz?

SH: Oh sure. There's Tamir Hendelman. He's playing with the Clayton Brothers and John Clayton's big band. He's living out in Los Angeles and is a fantastic musician. He was a great friend. We bonded immediately and he was teaching me all types of tunes and telling me what records to buy and was really a great early influence on me.

JJ: Changing the topic, how do you feel about the criticism of some jazz as of lesser value because it is too accessible?

SH: Oh, interesting. Well, you know my take on it as an artist is when I'm writing music I don't think about the audience at all. When I'm going through the creative process I don't think of anyone else, I just use my ears if I possibly can, but when I'm on stage I have to respect the fact that there's a thousand people in front of me and if they've all had a long day [chuckles] or a hard day at work, I'm there to connect with them. That's my job. If it's just about music itself, I can stay home and play music. There's a reason that we want to perform in front of other people as musicians, because we want to be appreciated and we want to share our stories and we want that type of connection. Those artists who get on stage and don't connect with audiences, they don't do well. You can be the most talented, brilliant musician ever, and not do well if you're not connecting to an audience. Ultimately the science of music itself is secondary to that notion that we're here to really connect with one another. Like I said why it's so effective for kids is it

teaches them to respect and listen to one another. Those extrinsic values of music are really, really important. Like one of the comments I get all the time with my band is that the thing that people love about it is they get to see five young men who really love and respect each other who are working together and creating something of great sensitivity and great beauty and they say they don't get to see a lot of young men who are working together in that manner. So there are people who appreciate the music and there are a lot of social elements that people appreciate as well.

The thing is the most complicated music that is truly genius is accessible. Beethoven is accessible, Duke Ellington is accessible, John Coltrane's "Naima" and "A Love Supreme" are accessible because they're essentially telling the story of a group of people. People like music when they feel they can see themselves in what they are hearing and a Duke Ellington or John Coltrane or Miles Davis. It's like a reflection of a group of people in this country during a certain era. Like when you hear a certain piece of music from your childhood that you really could relate to that part of your life story. It brings back pictures of your grandmother and the smell of muffins or whatever it is. [Chuckles] So, I think that's one of the real beautiful things about art. It's not just about some selfish guy in a room alone. It can be if that's what they want, but you might as well stay in a room alone. Why get on a stage with other people?

JJ: I'm surprised that you write without thinking of anyone, not even the members of your band?

SH: Up to this point, I generally have not thought specifically of the musicians with the exception of the record *Evolution*. That record I was thinking about specific musicians because that was a band concept that I knew was going to stay together and it had to be that specific group of musicians. So I did think of everyone's vibe. In general, you want to get to the point where you can get beyond thought when you are writing music because thought can be a major hindrance. Thought can involve a lot of judgment which is a time waster. When you sit to write music many times

you hit a couple of notes and immediately you start thinking, thinking, thinking, "No that's not right." "Oh it could be better." You start to judge and it's a tremendous waste of time actually. If you can get to the point where you're really observing when you play and you can hear what's on the inside of that sound you just played and what would come next, there's no reason to think that's good or bad. If you can really hear what's coming next, there is no judgment. It's a difficult space to get beyond though, which is why most of the time I write immediately when I wake up because that is when my mind is most clear. It's not cluttered at that point. I'll go right to the piano and usually something will come to me right away. Then I can spend all day just refining what I discovered in the first 10 minutes of the day. That's when the thinking comes in after you have the initial germ.

JJ: A Zen moment.

SH: Yes.

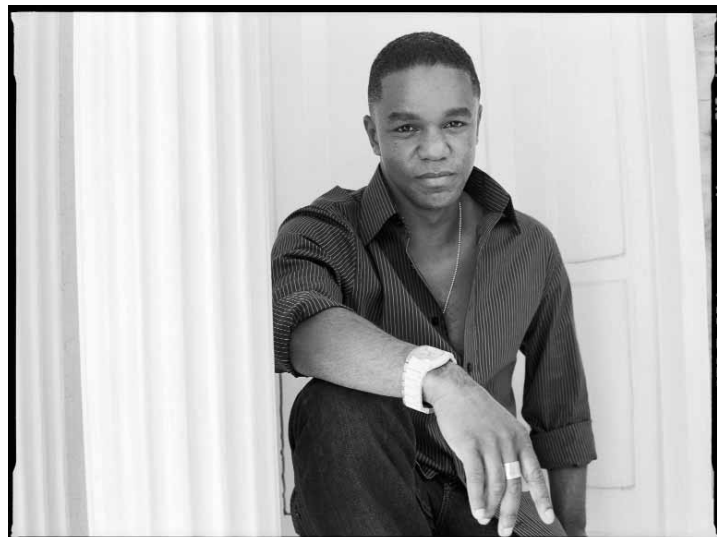
JJ: Well thank you so much for giving us so much time. It was most enjoyable to have this conversation.

SH: I appreciate the time. It's been nice talking to you, ciao.

JJ

You can find more about Stefon at his Website: www.stefonharris.com. You may also enjoy viewing his YouTube clips. I especially recommend "Stefon Harris at PASIC 2007" and "Stefon Harris gives jazz clinic in Kalamazoo" as two examples of his teaching style.

Schaen 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.



1,000 Jazz Musicians Cared For...

By Kathleen Mathieu

Music met medicine in a marvelous way when 15 jazz musicians joined in a tribute to physician and musician Francis A. Forte, MD, in the auditorium of Englewood Hospital and Medical Center on October 25.

Since 1993, Dr. Forte has led a unique program combining the pro-bono services of a network of physicians and the medical center, which has underwritten more than \$5 million of free care over the last 15 years.

The program is fulfilling a promise to Dizzy Gillespie, who was Dr. Forte's patient. The trumpeter was a patient at Englewood Hospital on many occasions. Shortly before he died, the doctor recalls, "Dizzy said, 'I can't give you any money, but I can let you use my name. Promise you'll help musicians less fortunate than I am.'"

His request resulted in the establishment of the Dizzy Gillespie Cancer Institute and the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund at the medical center. Donations to the fund help pay for the cost of the free services.

"Dr. Forte has a reputation in the jazz world, one that precedes him all around the country," says guitarist Roni Ben-Hur, who organized the concert. "Whenever his name comes up, the response is one of love, admiration and gratitude. For many years, Dr. Forte has been working very hard to provide musicians with the health care they need. His success has gone beyond the medical attention he's secured for so many. His noble personality gives each person he helps a sense of dignity, love and sincere care."



Margaret C. Bridge, Executive Vice President, EHMC Foundation; Dr. Frank Forte; Jimmy Owens, Vice President, Jazz Foundation of America; Roni Ben-Hur

Photos by Steve Hockstein/
HarvardStudio.com



Barry Harris



Jimmy Owens

A *Tribute to Frank Forte*, which was part of the medical center's celebration *Jazz*, opened with words of thanks and praise from Wendy Oxenhorn, executive director of the Jazz Foundation of America (JFA). The JFA assists uninsured musicians in accessing the free medical care. Tuba player Howard Johnson and pianist Danny Mixon provided personal accounts of the help they have received. Trumpeter Jimmy Owens, JFA vice president, was the main presenter of a plaque that reads:

15 Years of Caring for Jazz Musicians

Englewood Hospital and Medical Center and the Jazz Foundation of America acknowledge with gratitude Francis A. Forte, MD for his leadership, humanity and generosity in our efforts to keep our promise to Dizzy Gillespie.

1,000 Jazz Musicians cared for ...and counting!

and Counting | Frank Forte Tribute



far left: Guitarist Frank Vignola, Dr. Frank Forte, Kate Vignola

left: Bassist Ron Naspo, Dr. Frank Forte, Pianist Bob DeBenedette



far left: Roni Ben-Hur, Barry Harris, Dr. Frank Forte

left: Dr. Frank and Marie Forte



Bill & Claire Wurtzel

The star-studded roster of performers (in alphabetical order) included Roni Ben-Hur, Roz Corral, Santi Debriano, Barry Harris, Jana Herzen, Calvin Hill, Howard Johnson, Amy London, Danny Mixon, Jimmy Owens, Jack Wilkins, Leroy Williams, Steve Williams, Bill Wurtzel and Richard Wyands.

Dr. Forte joined his fellow musicians on stage.

“Frank is a hero,” says Ben-Hur. “It is tempting to say an American hero, but Frank is more than that. He is a world hero. All of us, the musicians who had the opportunity to celebrate him on October 25th, feel very fortunate. If it were up to the jazz world, Dr. Frank Forte would have a national holiday named for him. I’m sure it would be the hardest swinging holiday in the calendar.”



Kathleen Mathieu writes about jazz, healthcare, good people and other things that are near and dear to her heart. kmathieu@trwg.com, 201-939-1844.



Dr. Frank Forte

See page 28 for a sidebar to this story.

And More on the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund at Englewood...



Debut Duo Recording Featuring Roni Ben-Hur and Gene Bertoncini Will Benefit the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center

This November, Motéma Music, the Harlem-based record label that is home to Rufus Reid, Marc Cary, Lynne Arriale and Roni Ben-Hur among others, released the first in their new *Jazz Therapy* series of charitable fund raising CDs produced in association with the Jazz Foundation of America. *Jazz Therapy, Volume 1: Smile*, featuring master guitarists Gene Bertoncini and Roni Ben-Hur, will benefit the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center which, under the leadership of Dr. Frank Forte, has been responsible for providing millions of dollars of free care to jazz musicians.

The impetus for this new series came earlier this year from Ben-Hur and the late great jazz bassist Earl May, who once played with Ben-Hur regularly in the lobby of Englewood Hospital as part of a Jazz Foundation of America program. The two proposed to Motéma founder Jana Herzen that they collaborate to release a benefit CD to repay the hospital for its generosity to the Jazz community. Unfortunately May passed away suddenly in January 2008 before the disc could be recorded. At that point, Bertoncini generously stepped in to volunteer his talent as Ben-Hur's recording partner, resulting in the formation of what award-winning jazz critic Ira Gitler is now calling "an eminently special guitar duo."

"The combination of two guitars is more than the sum of its parts," writes Gitler in his liner notes for the project. "The chordal aspects are many; there are percussive possibilities; and, of course, the singing melodies of the single lines. When you factor in two such en rapport artists as Bertoncini and Ben-Hur the results are sublime."

Bertoncini, known as the 'Segovia' of jazz guitar, has a thriving solo career and has played on hundreds of recordings by such artists as Tony Bennett, Nancy Wilson, Benny Goodman and Hubert Laws. For Israeli born Ben-Hur, a first call NYC player known for his work with Barry Harris and for his singular Sephardic-tinged jazz style, *Smile* will be a second Motéma release and his sixth as a leader.

Bertoncini describes the recording process: "It was like getting together with an old friend and talking about life. From the first time we played together it was instant conversation." Also key to the deeply peaceful vibe at the recording sessions was the quiet presence of engineer Dae Bennett, who not only donated his prodigious engineering chops to this project but also donated recording time at his world class Bennett Studios in Englewood, NJ. "Just about my whole family was born or has died at that hospital," said Bennett, who was glad to have this opportunity to donate his services to the cause.

"The Motéma label, named after a central African word meaning heart, exclusively promotes master recording artists who care about making a positive difference in the world. Explains Jana Herzen, "Roni and Gene perfectly exemplify what I'm referring to. This music will be healing to anyone who listens to it, and for those of us who play guitar, it's also a master course in guitar arrangement! Personally, I'm in awe of what they've created. These are extraordinarily generous musicians in every sense of the word." JJ

Roni Ben-Hur/Gene Bertoncini Quartet: Jazz Therapy

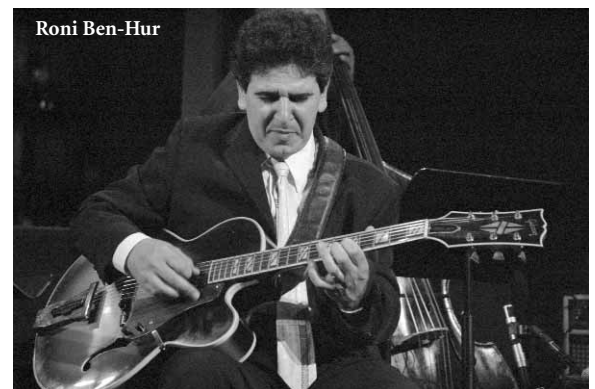
Photos by Frank Sole

The Roni Ben-Hur/Gene Bertoncini Quartet played a very special gig in honor of their new CD *Smile* at Dizzy's Club Coca Cola on Monday, November 3. Sales of this CD will benefit the Dizzy Gillespie Memorial Fund at Englewood Hospital. Joining Ben-Hur and Bertoncini were Rich DeRosa, drums; Santi Debriano, bass; special guest Gilad, African talking drum. Read more about the CD below. JJ

Frank Sole is an NJJS member and occasional contributor to Jersey Jazz.



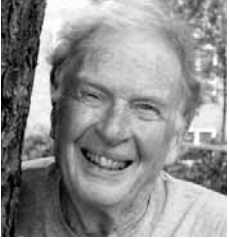
Gene Bertoncini



Roni Ben-Hur



Gilad



Noteworthy

Fradley Garner International Editor *Jersey Jazz*

**GIGGING MOTHER AND DAUGHTER...VANGUARD BAND'S DUO-CD RIDES CHARTS...
REEVES AND TYNER AT NJPAC...JIMMY COBB LOOKS MILES AHEAD...
NEW ORLEANS STALWARTS HEAD NORTH...WEB HIT-OF-MONTH**

ASIA'S QUEEN OF JAZZ they call **Annie Brazil**. The singer from Okinawa started at age six in stage shows, performed at 12 for American troops in Pamopanga, frontlined a nightclub act at 15, and at 20 landed a bigger contract on the Pacific island. That's when Ms. Brazil caught impresario George Wein's ear; he invited her to sing at the 1969 Newport Jazz Festival. Wider fame followed—appearances with **Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Dave Brubeck, The Bee Gees**, others. Based in New Jersey since 1990, Brazil lives in Hackettstown with her vocalist daughter **Rachel Ann Wolfe**, Rachel's husband and her four grandsons. This year, "At age 75, my Mom is the only Filipina who continues to have a following in a regular jazz joint in New York. I am not saying I can be like her," says the BMG (Sony) recording artist. "But she...heeded the call of music and stuck to it through good times and hard times. In that sense, I like what I have become." Both mother and daughter also gig at Merk's Bar Bistro in Manila.

THE VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA, "the hellacious big band once co-captained by Thad Jones and Mel Lewis," has seen its first live recording, *Monday Night Live at the Village Vanguard*, well up on the charts since its release this spring. All tracks on the two-CD set, recorded in February, were to have been posted on www.myspace.com/planetarts by this fall. The venerable Greenwich Village club is the Monday night home of the 16-piece band, whose new album is dedicated to their late bassist, **Dennis Irwin**. "The VJO performs this testament to intergenerational goodwill with relaxation and warmth," writes **Ted Gioia** in *jazz.com*. "The section work is a joy to hear, and top solo honors go to trombonist **John Mosca**."

JIMMY COBB, LAST SURVIVING PLAYER on *Kind of Blue*, the alleged most popular jazz album of all time, has formed a new band.

"I'm sorry that all my friends are gone, you know, but I've got them here," Cobb pointed to his heart in an interview with the *Village Voice* (Oct. 14). The drummer on the 1959 album that has sold more than 3 million copies, was feted in October as a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, the nation's highest award in its field. In September, a "super-deluxe" 50th-anniversary edition of *Kind of Blue* was unveiled—a half year before the golden anniversary of the March 2, 1959 recording in New York. Cobb turns 80 on January 20. And then he'll start sparking his new So What Band, continuing *Kind of Blue's* golden celebration.

WBGO OFFERS ORCHESTRA SEATS to station members who want to catch a night of live jazz with triple-Grammy-winning vocalist **Dianne Reeves** and heralded pianist-composer **McCoy Tyner** on Friday, December 19, 8 PM at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, One Center St. in Newark. "After the show," the hosts invite you to "join us downstairs at Theatre Square Grill for a dessert reception, where you can hang out with another great lady, Midday Jazz's **Rhonda Hamilton**" and other WBGO staffers. Tickets are \$75 and include the dessert reception. Call 973-624-8880, Ext. 24.

BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA and **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** are hitting the road in "Down by the Riverside," a co-billed tour that's taking the historic New Orleans institutions as far north as the Lebanon, New Hampshire Opera House on March 26, 2009, Boston Symphony Hall, March 27, and the State Theatre in Ithaca, New York, March 28. Formed in 1939, the Blind Boys have won four Grammy Awards in recent years and appeared on nationwide TV. Preservation Hall Jazz Band, founded 1961, won the 2006 National Medal of Arts, the country's highest honor. This December and the following two months may still be open for bookings,



Dianne Reeves

should venues in the Metropolitan New York-New Jersey area be interested. (See Web Hit below.)

Correction: An item in this space in November stated that The American Rag had stopped its hard-copy (paper) edition and gone over to a paperless e-mail format. In fact The Mississippi Rag made that switch. Don Robertson kindly pointed this out.



WEB HIT-OF-THE-MONTH:

How did the Blind Boys of Alabama get their start, and what is this male gospel group all about? Jimmy Carter (no, not the ex-prexy) and others explain in a clip from their new album. Check 'em out at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WW3FFRuENag

Thanks to NJJS member Joán McGinnis of Mission Viejo, CA for Web research assistance.

NEA Jazz Masters

Story and photos by Mitchell Seidel

There came a moment during the 2000 National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters ceremony when honoree Marian McPartland eschewed a formal speech and instead headed to the piano, expressing her thanks in music. It was a refreshing change of pace for the ceremony formerly held at the International Association for Jazz Education (IAJE) annual convention and it made you wonder why it hadn't been done before.

With the demise of the IAJE earlier this year, the honor of hosting the annual awards ceremony fell to Jazz at Lincoln Center trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and its jazz orchestra. The 2009 class of Jazz Masters presented at JALC this year is comprised of guitarist George Benson, drummer Jimmy Cobb, saxophonist Lee Konitz, multi-instrumentalist Toots Thielemans, recording engineer Rudy Van Gelder and trumpeter Snooky Young. This time, in addition to snippets of music provided by the usual short



New NEA Jazz Master George Benson, left, performs with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. October 17, 2008.

The 2009 NEA Jazz Masters have a panel discussion prior to this year's awards ceremony and concert in the Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center, from left: NEA Chairman Dana Gioia, George Benson, Jimmy Cobb, Rudy Van Gelder, Jean-Baptist "Toots" Thielemans, Lee Konitz and Eugene "Snooky" Young.





NEA Jazz Masters Randy Weston, left, and David Baker share a laugh backstage as they wait to attend the concert honoring the 2009 Jazz masters.

biographical films of each honoree, the audience was treated to live performances by some of them with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

The combination of the two organizations is a match made in heaven. In Jazz at Lincoln Center, the NEA has a world-class venue complete with its own jazz orchestra for its ceremony. In the NEA Jazz Masters, Jazz at Lincoln Center has an evening of programming that is an ideal fit for its mission, especially when you consider that the annual ceremony is always preceded by a panel discussion featuring the honorees, as it was this year.

Moderated by outgoing NEA Chairman Dana Gioia, the one-hour segment provided just some tantalizing snippets of what one used to hear at the longer format discussions during the IAJE conventions. Like old

continued on page 32



NEA Jazz Master Roy Haynes, left, listens as new NEA Jazz Master Jimmy Cobb accepts his award at the Rose Theater.

The NEA Jazz Masters class of 2009 pose for a group portrait with NEA Chairman Dana Gioia. Clockwise from upper left: Gioia, George Benson, Jean-Baptiste "Toots" Thielemans, Jimmy Cobb, Rudy Van Gelder, Lee Konitz and Eugene "Snooky" Young.



NEA JAZZ MASTERS

continued from page 31



The NEA Jazz Masters gather for their annual group portrait before award ceremonies.



Wynton Marsalis, left, listens as NEA Chairman Dana Gioia address the audience at the concert and ceremonies.

baseball players swapping tales at a Cooperstown reunion, they treated the audience to anecdotes about people they worked with along the way. Thielemans recounted his experiences in postwar Europe and the oddity of playing jazz harmonica when it wasn't a common instrument, Cobb, naturally, talked of Miles Davis, Konitz of Lennie Tristano and Young, with the help of a translator due to failing hearing, of the many big bands with which he played.

Benson reflected on his roots, including his first home-made guitar that was fashioned from the then new material Formica. A man who made his name as an instrumentalist in the organ trio circuit that included clubs in Newark and Plainfield, he also was proud

that after crossing over into widespread popularity with his singing he was able to return to his roots by eventually touring with the Count Basie ghost band.

Van Gelder, a recording engineer whose early Hackensack and current Englewood Cliffs studios qualify as historic jazz landmarks, again pooh-poohed the notion of a personalized "sound" that added a distinctive quality to his sessions.

Of all the collaborations presented in the short history of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the NEA Jazz Masters day was one of the most rewarding on so many levels. We can only hope that this year's marks the first in a long series. **JJ**

Mitchell Seidel is Jersey Jazz's contributing photo editor, and an assistant photo editor and photography witer for The Star-Ledger.



Jazz In January at Centenary College

2009 will be the sixth year of jazz at Centenary College in Hackettstown, NJ. It all started in July

2004 with a series of four concerts featuring great jazz players in mainstream, Dixieland, Latin, and jazz vocalists — all forms of jazz, appealing to a wide audience.

This January series of three concerts will be held in the Whitney Chapel, with seating for 400 people, and wonderful acoustics. There is open seating with main floor and balcony seating.

Coyne Enterprises produces these concerts, but all proceeds benefit the Centenary Stage Company. The concept is to present great jazz musicians in an entertaining way. In fact their tag line is “It’s not just jazz, it’s great entertainment!” Some of the great musicians who have appeared at Centenary include Bucky Pizzarelli, Phil Woods, Urbie Green, Warren Vaché, Diva Jazz all-woman Big Band, Bill Mays, Joe Locke, Jay Leonhardt, Smith Street Society Band, Harry Allen, Joe Cohn, David “Fathead” Newman, and many more.

This January’s line-up



■ **JANUARY 10 AT 8 PM — BOBBY CALDWELL**
Bobby will be singing Sinatra backed by Dick Meldonian’s 17-piece big band with original Nelson Riddle arrangements. Bobby’s performances are always electrifying! Bobby starred as Frank Sinatra in the David Cassidy/Don Reo theatrical production *The Rat Pack Is Back* in Las Vegas, Nevada. *Tickets: \$40 at door; \$35 in advance; child 18 & under \$27.50*



■ **JANUARY 17 AT 8 PM THE HOUSTON PERSON QUARTET** Houston on tenor sax backed by a great rhythm section. Houston’s command performance is back by popular demand. Houston is known as the natural heir to the Boss Tenor crown. *Tickets: \$27.50 at door; \$22.50 in advance; child 18 & under \$17.50.*

■ **JANUARY 24 AT 8 PM ALL STAR JAZZ SEPTET** Seven of the hottest musicians around! Jesse Green on piano, Dennis Jeter on trumpet and vocals, Nelson Hill on alto sax and flute, Lisa Parrott on baritone sax, John Jensen on trombone, Evan Gregor on bass, and Daniel Gonzalez on drums. *Tickets: \$27.50 at door; \$22.50 in advance; child 18 & under \$17.50.*

Centenary College is easy to get to, located on Jefferson Street in Hackettstown. The website has detailed information on each concert, ticket information with easy ordering and directions to the College. Tickets can be purchased online at www.centenarystageco.org, or by calling the Box Office at 908-979-0900, or by calling Coyne Enterprises at 908-637-6455.

Save by purchasing all three concerts — advance one-time purchase: Adults: \$75; Child/Students 18 & under: \$55.

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Jazz Goes to School The College Jazz Scene

By Frank Mulvaney

Princeton University — October 11

The first college concert of the season was titled “Swing: Standard Time” and was composed of standards from the Great American Songbook. Cole Porter’s “I Love You” was a good one to start with and the Les Harper arrangement showed off the talent of the 18-piece ensemble and served as a harbinger of the good things to follow. Trumpeter Will Livengood had a marvelous solo with long, strong lines; freshman vibraphonist Jackson Greenberg made us take notice with very mature playing; and pianist Daniel Berry contributed clever improvised statements of his own. Ed Neumeister’s non-traditional arrangement of “A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square” gave tenorist Kevin Sun and pianist Jason Weinreb an opportunity in the spotlight as we got a glimpse of the early Vanguard band sound. This was followed by a Bill Holman arrangement of “Just Friends” allowing the brass to cut loose and Kevin Laskey to chip in with a fine drum solo. “Darn That Dream” brought out sophomore vocalist Amelia Wells. In just eight bars of this great ballad you could tell that this young lady is a natural jazz singer. Amelia would go on to treat us to three more tunes, and I’m excited about hearing her again and again in the coming years. Continuing in the ballad vein, we heard “Who Can I Turn To” made famous by singer Anthony Newley, who wrote the lyrics to Lesley Bricusse’s music. This and the preceding arrangement by Matt Harris gave us wonderful big band listening pleasure as Amelia delivered a dramatic interpretation of the bittersweet lyrics. It was now time for a change of pace and we got it with Lerner and Lowe’s “Almost Like Being in Love.” The ensemble really cranked it up and at this point Amelia owned the audience. A swinging Vince Mendoza arrangement of Sammy Fein’s Oscar winning tune “Secret Love” took us into the homestretch and made me anxious about the impending conclusion to this delightful concert of music I have loved for so long. It’s said in show business that you want to leave the audience begging for more. What better way to do that than with a tune like “It Don’t Mean a Thing, If It Ain’t Got That Swing.” Amelia was in on this one and the girl can really swing as so many of the fine young musicians in the ensemble can. The extended version of this timeless classic permitted most of the players to kick in with fine licks as the evening came to a conclusion with a standing ovation.

Make a note on your calendar for the next Princeton jazz concert on **Saturday, December 6**, when the music of 13-time Grammy winner **Pat Metheny** will be featured. It’s a wonderful time of year when the quaint village of Princeton will be wearing its holiday finery. If you have never visited the town and the magnificent campus, it would be a good time to do so. If you love lush and crisp big band sound you could become a regular at Princeton concerts (only \$15).

William Paterson University — October 12

On this afternoon we had the first installment of the Fall Semester Jazz Room series now in its 31st year. As usual we had a student opening group, a sextet with students from California, Washington and New Jersey. Their first selection was a lesser-known Strayhorn composition entitled “Upper Manhattan Medical Group.” Trumpeter David Pomerantz quickly demonstrated that he is a superior player. His tone and style reminded me a lot of Warren Vaché. Guitarist Nicholas Indalecio delivered some cogent thoughts on this sophisticated tune. This was followed by an impressive original by senior pianist Jordan Piper called “Miss S,” a moderate tempo melodic composition on which we had great harmonies with trumpet and Forest Wernick’s tenor sax. Later in the piece Forest really showed us what he could do. The third number of the set was the season-appropriate “Autumn Leaves” which featured a beautiful long guitar intro and a gorgeous tenor interpretation at a slower than normal tempo, producing a bit of a melancholy feeling. This tight group took on Joe Henderson’s “Mode for Joe” for its final selection. Behind some creative input from drummer Jake Brady and bassist Adrian Morning the group demonstrated exceptional dynamics through several tempo changes that I’ve come to expect from the students of this world-class jazz studies program.

The featured artist was a young man (only 32) named Orrin Evans. I can’t ever remember being so impressed by a young pianist. His technique is just plain awesome. His use of time and space, diminuendo and crescendo is extraordinary. While he has already played with some of the biggest names in the jazz world here and abroad, he is also a teacher, record producer, record company owner and clinician. He brought along two outstanding rhythm players with Grammy winner Eric Revis on bass and Obed Calvaire on drums. The first selection was “Autumn Leaves” although it sounded like something much different to this educated ear. Right out of the gate Orrin was going for highly creative and aggressive ideas. But it was a fully integrated trio effort in which piano did not dominate. Eric gave us a long interpretive bass solo that only a top-notch musician could deliver. This tune went on for easily 15 minutes with amazing percussive input from Obed and when it was over there was the sense that its potential was far from being exhausted. The second selection was an original from Eric entitled “Phi.” This number started out in what you might call minimalist mode, with dramatic flourishes from Orrin. A number of ideas were expressed by each member without much suggestion of where it was all headed, but I enjoyed going along for the ride. Obed utilized a seemingly bottomless bag of percussive effects to drive the trio to a satisfying resolution. This was followed by the seldom heard Michel La Grande tune “I Will Wait for You.” Would you believe this beautiful ballad opened with a long

and very tasteful drum solo? Orrin and Eric could have gone off-stage for a quick cigarette. Orrin explored the central theme over and over again with various length waits, which was the point of the piece. By this time, I had become a little overwhelmed by the artistry of the young genius. The hour-long set was concluded with a fourth piece, again from Eric, called “J.D.’s Revenge.” The title did not quite fit, as

the front end was rather meditative with much



continued on page 36



Paquito D'Rivera

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COLLEGE JAZZ *continued from page 34*

beautiful quiet playing by Orrin. The piece progressed wonderfully through several mood changes as the players complimented each other's contributions. You could say it was a conversation in jazz as was the entire concert. I felt fortunate to be present and I hope you get a chance to see and hear Orrin soon.

By the time you read this you will still have time to plan to attend the final Jazz Room session of the semester on **Friday December 12** at 8 PM when the **University Jazz Orchestra** will perform Wynton Marsalis's "Night Before Christmas," the Ellington/ Strayhorn "Nutcracker Suite" and other holiday selections. Admission is only \$15, with discounts at \$12 for seniors and \$8 for students.

New Jersey City University — October 13

What a treat it was to attend Mike Longo's Concert and Master Class at the Ingalls Recital Hall. The place was SRO for this great musician. Mike is an extraordinary pianist with a remarkable history for a man not yet seventy years old. He was playing with Cannonball Adderley while he was still in the 10th grade. As a young professional he went on to get his B.A. in classical piano from Western Kentucky State. He played with numerous jazz luminaries during the late '50s and for a time was the house pianist at the famous Metropole in Manhattan. Following two years of study with the great Oscar Peterson, Mike went on to be associated with Dizzy Gillespie for nearly 20 years, even delivering his eulogy in 1983. The man has 19 albums to his credit and also has authored nine books.

For the concert, Mike was joined by well-known drummer Tim Horner and faculty member Andy Eulau on the bass. The first selection of the evening was the Wayne Shorter composition "Speak No Evil." There were many oohs and aahs to be heard in the largely student audience which was so impressed by Mike's mastery. Andy and Tim got their share of applause too as they took their turns at soloing. Mike briefly discussed Errol Garner from the piano bench and proceeded to play "Stars Fell On Alabama" in a style that Errol might have played it. For the third tune, Mike paid tribute to his mentor Oscar Peterson with

"Tenderly." This popular tune was played lovingly at the traditional tempo and morphed into an up-tempo pace where Andy and Tim could add more creative input. The set concluded with an homage to Dizzy as the trio played "Con Alma." I thought the selections were just right and the final one with the usual Latin beat capped off the concert nicely.

Following a brief intermission, Mike gave a master class on the Latin rhythms that his longtime associate Mr. Gillespie is often credited with having introduced to jazz. He used the blackboard to graph rhythmic patterns to help explain the concepts and then demonstrated them on the conga drum. Not being a trained musician, I didn't know what he was saying half the time, but judging by the nature of the questions, the students sure did.

Make plans to see trumpet ace **Marvin Stamm** in concert with the **NJCU Jazz Ensemble** on **Monday evening, December 8** at the Margaret Williams Theatre, 7:30, \$15 admission, \$10 for students and seniors.

Rutgers University — October 14

If someone said to you that you could attend a two-hour big band concert of music written by some of the world's greatest jazz composers, performed by one of the finest college ensembles in the country, in a magnificent venue, for **free**, would you go?

Rutgers University Jazz Ensemble Director Ralph Bowen has a special preference for the big band music of David Baker and Neil Slater. Mr. Baker heads the Jazz Studies program at Indiana University and is a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master. Mr. Slater heads Jazz Studies at North Texas University, the oldest and largest such program in the country. This evening, we would hear a total of five works from these gentlemen and five more from other jazz legends. Leading off the first set we heard "The Jody Grind" from Horace Silver. This is a big brassy chart that rocks. There were five

trumpets in and we had a hot trombone solo by Andrea Gonnella and a very impressive one from bassist Julian Smith. The Slater composition "Nose Prints" followed. This swing tune had a different full ensemble sound and some unusual harmonies featuring flute and soprano sax in the mix during the early going and flugels later on. Drummer Jaimeo Brown contributed an aggressive yet tasteful solo on this one. "An Evening Thought" from Mr. Baker started out like a ballad with wonderful textures generated by muted trumpets and trombones. Cascading brass effects were followed by a morphing into a samba with pianist Andy Michalec and altoist Eric Neveloff providing excellent improvisations. John Coltrane's beautiful ballad "Central Park West" allowed tenorist Ryan Oliver to step out and show his rich and true tone. Ryan is from Canada and recently released his debut album. Capping the first half we had a driving swinger called "I.U. Swing Machine" by Mr. Baker. Given the chance, trumpeter Curtis Taylor had a lot of interesting things to say here.

The second set began with a pleasant medium swing chart called "Eleven Nights" from trombone monster John Fedchok which featured trumpeter Donald Malloy (an NJJS scholarship winner) and pianist Barry Spatz. This was followed by Neil Slater's "Wink," a modern, progressive composition which presented some challenges for the ensemble players that they dealt with in stride. Into this eclectic mix came Bill Evans's "Waltz for Debby" on which guitarist Aaron Quinn made an essential contribution. "Search," the final Slater composition of the evening, was a well-chosen departure exemplifying the composer's unbridled creativity as it moves back and forth between a funk and samba feel. Concluding



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this wonderful evening of big band jazz was the familiar hard swing “The Eternal Triangle,” which I now know was written by the great Sonny Stitt. Drummer Chris Beck finally had his chance to show his stuff and he most definitely did impress. The third fine pianist of the night, Paul Kirby, also got his shot on this one and he delivered big time.

**Rutgers University —
October 20**

If you were a fan of Basie Band music and Benny Carter arrangements you would have been in hog heaven this night, as the undergraduate jazz ensemble performed nine of the 10 swinging tunes of *The Kansas City Suite*. Where else could you expect to hear classic Basie, live and for *free*?

The first tune was “Vine Street Rumble,” a medium up-tempo swing with a shuffle feel. The sax section plays the tune in unison and the brasses interject rhythmic figures. Here we heard a marvelous piano solo from Mike Bond and a hot improv from tenorist Leo Volf. The tempo drops a notch or two for “Katy-do,” a

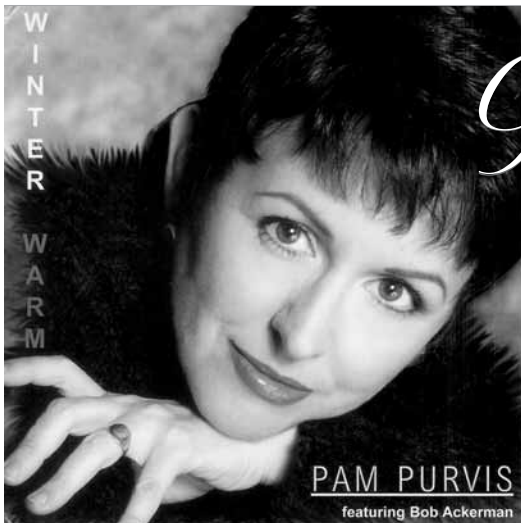
laid back chart on a lovely melody which featured an excellent muted trumpet contribution from Caitlin Nichols. Altoist Yuki Yosida had a fine solo as did trombonist Jeff Smith on “Miss Missouri,” a medium shuffle with a marvelous melody that sticks for a long time. This was followed by “Jackson County Jubilee,” a big brassy up-tempo swinger on which baritone sax-man Mark Chertoff showed his stuff. The final segment of the first half was “Meetin’ Time,” a medium slow swing with a tinge of gospel flavor on which we had the trombones and saxes playing call and response. It featured Joseph Christianson on trumpet, Eric Drylewicz on trombone and Rupp Chatt on flute.

Opening the second half of the concert we heard “Paseo Promenade,” a comfortable swing tune evoking a spirited joyful feeling giving the sax section a workout and on which had a terrific solo from pianist Chris McFarland. The sax section carries the load with that signature Basie sound on “Blues Five Jive.” Here we had some nice work from tenorist Tyler Adel and guitarist Greg Paton, and a very impressive improv from Rupp Chatt on trombone. The

tempo was ramped up once more with “Rompin at the Reno,” a joy to hear as each horn section takes turns leading the charge. The individual standouts on this one were John DiSanto on alto, Dan Bascom on guitar and especially Dan Silverstein on drums. The set coasted home with “Wiggle Walk,” at different times focusing on the trombone and sax sections with frequent hits from the trumpets as the tune evolved into a hard swing as a fitting climax to a great night of classic Basie.

You have a chance to catch three events at Rutgers this December. On **Tuesday the 2nd**, the **big band** performs for free again. And on **Wednesday the 3rd**, Grammy winner **Pablo Ziegler** and his trio perform, for \$10. Both concerts are at the Nicholas Music Center at 8:00 PM. The **Chamber Jazz Ensembles** perform for free on **Thursday the 4th** at the Schare Recital Hall, 8:00 PM. **JJ**

I welcome your comments and questions. E-mail me: fmulvaney@comcast.net



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Pam performs material from the CD at these December gigs:

- 12/4:** Skippers Plane St. Cafe, Newark
- 12/14:** Van Gogh’s Ear, Union
- 12/18:** Papillon, South Orange
- 12/5, 12, 20, 26, 31 (New Year’s Eve):** T’s Trattoria, West Caldwell

for details visit www.pampurvis.com

WINTER WARM

- All vocals: Pam Purvis
- All woodwinds: Bob Ackerman
- Guitar: Joe Cohn
- Bass: Alec Dankworth, Chip Jackson
- Drums: Sylvia Cuenca, Steve Johns

Pam Purvis is a rich-voiced chanteuse with total phrasing control, a lightly textured vibrato, and pipes reminiscent of jazz greats like Rosemary Clooney. Her sophisticated *Winter Warm* has some of the best jazz vocals I have heard this season. She’s the real deal.
—Carol Swanson (Reviewed in 2007)



Other Views

By Joe Lang
NJS Music
Committee Chair

I am a bit intimidated by the stack of CDs before me to review. I did not do this column last month, and am really backlogged. Fortunately, I have no new additions to report to our inventory, so I shall concentrate this month on the best of the rest, albums that are worth seeking out, but not part of NJS inventory.

■ Each year there are new Christmas albums flooding the market, with a few of them having a jazz orientation. **Music and Mistletoe (Wag Records – 2040)** by **WAYNE BERGERON** with **THE AFTER HOURS BRASS** is a wonderful addition to this holiday genre. Bergeron is an A-list West Coast jazz trumpeter, and he has gathered a fine group of brass compatriots, Andy Martin on trombone, Alan Kaplan on tuba, Deb Wagner Bergeron on trumpet, and Brad Warnaar on French horn, with a supplemental rhythm section of Christian Jacob on piano, Ken Wild or Trey Henry on bass and John Friday or Ray Brinker on drums to form a small band that sounds like a much larger one. For two tracks, "Christmas is the Warmest Day of the Year" and "Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!" vocalist Tierney Sutton adds just the right touch. Sutton is accompanied only by the trio of Jacob, Henry and Brinker, plus Wayne Bergeron on these superb tracks. The arrangements for the other 16 selections are the work of Gary Slechta. Mixing jazz and Christmas music is a tricky business. On the secular selections, jazz interpretations are readily accepted, but on the carols, there is more reluctance to stray far from the melodies, so most jazz interpretations take the path followed here by Slechta, the introduction of some different harmonies, and the addition of rhythm colors. This is not an album full of improvisations, rather nice arrangements that incorporate jazz and swing elements into a brass quintet setting. My judgment of the success of what Bergeron and his band mates have produced will be

apparent in my home during the holiday season, as I expect this album to be a significant element in the rotation of holiday music that I will be playing. (www.afterhoursbrass.com)

■ **SHERRIE MARICLE & THE DIVA JAZZ ORCHESTRA** have taken their place at the forefront of the current big band scene. Being an all-female big band, they had to demonstrate that they were a serious musical organization worthy of being judged on the merits of their music, rather than as a curiosity in a male-dominated genre. It did not take them long to prove that they were about music rather than gender. With **Live from Jazz at Lincoln Center's Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola (Diva Jazz Orchestra)** they have added another superb recording to their growing catalog of swinging big band sounds. Recorded in September of 2007 at Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, this disc captures the excitement of seeing and hearing DIVA in live performance. They are effective at drawing the audience into their performances with their combination of musicianship and enthusiasm. They open with "I Love Being Here with You," and it is obvious from the first notes that the title of this song has a special meaning for them. Following two more impressive instrumental turns on "Andalucia" and "Stars Fell on Alabama," vocalist Carmen Bradford arrived on the scene to assay, in her own inimitable, swinging manner, "Sweet Georgia Brown," "This Can't Be Love," and "I'd Rather Drink

Muddy Water." The spotlight returned to the band for "Rachel's Dream," "Put a Little Love in Your Heart" and a delightful "Happy Talk," featuring the alto saxes of Erica vanKleist and Sharel Cassity. Bradford was back at the mic for deft readings of "How Do You Keep the Music Playing" and "All of Me." Trumpeter Tanya Darby and pianist Tomoko Ohno got down with "TPN Blues," before things were brought to a conclusion with Ellen Rowe's dynamic arrangement of "America" from *West Side Story*. This is a superbly recorded disc that makes you feel that you are at a table in this beautiful club where the view of Central Park is never far from your consciousness. (www.divajazz.com)

■ A live set from groups led by **HARRY ALLEN** usually includes at least one bossa nova selection. Over the years he has recorded a few albums that concentrated on this music, and has appeared frequently with groups that feature Brazilian jazz such as Trio Da Paz. **Viva! Bossa Nova (Swing Brothers – 28021)** is the latest of many albums that Allen has made for release in Japan. For this session, he is joined by pianist Klaus Mueller, bassist Pat O'Leary and drummer Joe Ascione. They do indeed make beautiful music together. The program is dominated by songs by Antonio Carlos Jobim who composed seven of the 13 selections, including the opening tune, "Wave," and the closer, "How Insensitive." Throughout, these four non-Brazilian jazzmen demonstrate that the music of

Brazil has become an integral part of their musical vocabulary. It is easy to understand why, as the gentle, but compelling rhythms of this music are appealing to both players and listeners. Allen never rests on his considerable laurels. He continues to grow as a player, always pushing himself to find another subtle way of broadening his improvisational genius. Mueller is a revelation. He is originally from Germany, but has been in New York City for about ten years, and plays with several groups with Brazilian orientation. His playing on this disc is superb. O'Leary and Ascione are both versatile masters of their instruments. The total package is completely satisfying, another in a long line of excellent albums fronted by Allen. (www.harryallenjazz.com)

■ Given their long history as jazz masters with parallel careers, it is an oddity that pianist **HANK JONES** and saxophonist **JAMES MOODY** have not been on many recordings together. That makes **Our Delight (IPO – 1013)** even

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OTHER VIEWS

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more special as a reality than it is as a dream. Todd Coolman on bass and Adam Nussbaum join Jones and Moody for a 12-song program that is full of the kind of excitement and subtle improvisation that you would expect from two Hall of Famers. The tunes that they chose to blow on are from the A-list of jazz and pop standards, and blow they do in a most pleasurable manner. The songs are "Our Delight," "Lady Bird," "Good Bait" and "Soul Trane" by Tadd Dameron; "Birk's Works" "Con Alma" and "Woody 'N' You" by Dizzy Gillespie; "Eternal Triangle" by Sonny Stitt; "Darben the Red Fox" by Moody; "Moody's Groove" by Jimmy Heath; and two pop tunes, "Body and Soul" and "Old Folks." Moody plays both tenor sax and flute with great fluency and imagination. He has a wonderful tone on both instruments. He came to prominence as a bebopper, and those roots are still evident, but he is not solely tied down to the conventions of that school. Jones plays with the kind of elegance that was often associated with Teddy Wilson, but you would be hard pressed to find a pianist who swings harder. Coolman and Nussbaum are perfect complements to the two giants of jazz who front this quartet. An added treat is the presence of vocalist Roberta Gambarini on the closing track, "Moody's Groove." She gives the listener a taste of why she is admired so much by veterans like Moody and Jones. Grab hold of a copy of *Our Delights*, and it will assuredly become your delight. (www.iporecordings.com)

■ After listening to the new release by pianist **ROGER KELLAWAY**, *Live at the Jazz Standard (IPO – 1014)*, my immediate reaction was to wonder why I had not made the scene during his gig there. Kellaway is, after all, one of the best of the living jazz pianists, and he was surrounded by the stellar crew of Russell Malone on guitar and Jay Leonhart on bass, with guest appearances by Stefon Harris on vibes and Borislav Strulev on cello. It was also a rare opportunity to hear Kellaway live, as he does not venture east all that frequently these days. Well, at least there are the performances documented on this two-disc album to treasure and absorb. Kellaway has his own way of approaching songs, as is readily apparent on a track like "Take Five," where he is totally un-Brubeck-like in his conception and execution, refreshingly so. Malone is a man with a musical mind that defies categorization. He is a great student of the Great American Songbook and of jazz styles. This gives him a greater degree of familiarity with tunes from the past than is the case with most of his contemporaries, and more flexibility in how to approach a given tune. This is a perfect match for the eclecticism of Kellaway. Leonhart is among the best on his instrument, possessed of a terrific sense of time, and a creative approach to improvisation. Together these three form a magnificent trio. The addition of Harris on several tracks adds another major creative force to the mix. There are about two hours of music contained on these discs. There are not many better ways that I can think of to spend two hours than to revisit what these cats laid down back in May of 2006. (www.iporecordings.com)

Speaking of exceptional piano players, the latest releases in the Keepnews Collection, the reissues of classic Riverside albums produced by Orrin Keepnews, are ones by Thelonious Monk and Bill Evans.

■ The solo piano playing of **THELONIOUS MONK** is among the most cherished of my jazz listening experiences. There was no other player who thought or played like Monk. There are those who have been of the opinion that he was a mediocre player with bad technique and that his music was inaccessible to most listeners. To them I say give *Thelonious Himself (Riverside – 30510)* a fair listen. What you will hear is a musician who did approach tunes from a somewhat different angle than others, but also a musician who was very focused, carefully selecting notes to take each selection exactly where he

wanted it to go. This album consists of eight tunes spread over 13 tracks, including four alternate takes and one false start. Five of the eight songs, "April in Paris," "(I Don't Stand) A Ghost of a Chance (With You)," "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," "I Should Care" and "All Alone" are standards, while the other three are Monk originals, "Functional," "Round Midnight," and "Monk's Mood." All except for the last mentioned song are solo performances by Monk, with John Coltrane on tenor sax and Wilbur Ware on bass being added for "Monk's Mood." Monk had an affinity for older Tin Pan Alley songs when performing piano solos, and the five that he chose to include here were among his favorites. The accompanying liner notes by Orrin Keepnews are full of insights about Monk's creative process, and his unique personality. This is an entertaining and informative package. (www.concordmusicgroup.com)

■ **BILL EVANS** was probably the most influential jazz pianist of the second half of the 20th Century. The trio that he fronted with bassist Scott LaFaro and drummer Paul Motian in many ways redefined the piano/bass/drums format. Evans was determined to make his trio an organic unit that relied on each player assuming an equal role rather than the format that predominated up to that point where the bass and drums served mainly as support for the pianist who was the focal point of the group. The remarkable trio that evolved was sadly short lived. It last only about two years, as LaFaro's life was cut short when he was killed in a traffic accident. His final performances with the Bill Evans Trio occurred on June 25, 1961 at the Village Vanguard, 10 days before his death. Highlights from those final performances appear on **Sunday at the Village Vanguard (Riverside – 30509)**. As originally released, the album had six tracks. There are four alternate takes on this reissue, one each of four songs. At the insistence of Evans, the tunes selected for the album were ones on which LaFaro was prominent as a soloist, including two songs, "Gloria's

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Step" and "Jade Visions," that were composed by him. LaFaro was an exceptional bassist, and his soloing ability influenced many bassists who followed. The selections here offer ample evidence of exactly why this is so. As on the Monk album above, the liner notes by Orrin Keepnews amplify our understanding of the players and their music. This album served as a memorial of sorts to LaFaro, but it is more than that. It is a wonderful taste of what it was like to experience this special trio in the intimacy of one of the great jazz clubs. (www.concordmusicgroup.com)

■ Trombonist **PHIL WILSON** is a monster player who has been on the scene for over 50 years, with credits playing on the bands of Herb Pomeroy, the Dorsey Brothers and Woody Herman. In the mid-1960s he joined the faculty at the Berklee School of Music, and has continued to be one of the major figures in jazz education. He set some time aside for arranging and playing gigs, but has done little recording as a leader for the last 20 years. His latest recording, ***Celebrates the Music of Antonio Carlos "Tom" Jobim (Capri - 74079)***, actually released in 2006, takes a rather eclectic look at the music of the bossa nova master. The bossa feeling is never far from your consciousness, but Wilson and the other members of his Pan-American All-Stars Sextet, Matt Marugilo on bass flute, Larry Baione on guitar, Dario Eskenazi on piano, Oscar Stagnaro on bass and Mark Walker on drums, add some other jazz influences to the mix. Wilson's trombone is the dominant voice. He is a marvelous musician, technically brilliant and flowing with imaginative improvisations. Marugilo's bass flute adds an unusual but engaging voice to the mix. Wilson may be selective in taking on recording projects, but this one, like earlier explorations the scores of *The Wizard of Oz* and *Pal Joey*, as well as a marvelous collection of Harold Arlen songs, is worth the wait between releases. (www.caprirecords.com)

■ On ***Remembering Beauty***, trombonist **GEORGE VOLAND** leads a fine quartet, with Ali Ryerson on flute, John Pisano on guitar and Jeff Johnson on bass, through a 10-song program of straight-ahead interpretations of pop and jazz standards. Voland, who spent over 30 years as a jazz educator in New England, now resides in the state of Washington where this album was recorded at a concert sponsored by the Seattle Jazz Guitar Society. The Society made a wise choice bringing Ryerson in from Connecticut, and Pisano in from Southern California to join up with local players Voland and Johnson for a memorable meeting of musical minds. The pairing of trombone and flute on the front line, two instruments at opposite ends of the sound spectrum proves to be a wise one. The musicians beautifully complement each other, with neither horn dominating the other. They kick things off with the great Monk tune, "Straight, No Chaser." This is a spirited introduction to an eclectic program that has among its highlights a nice vocal contribution from Jeanne Pisano on "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," Ryerson's lovely reading of "Darn That Dream," a rousing "Blues in the Closet," and the conclusion of the concert, a wistful rendition of "You've Changed" by Voland. Having produced concerts for NJJS, I know how nice it feels when a particular concert turns out just as wonderfully as you imagine that it will, and Allen Johnson, Jr. surely had that feeling when this evening concluded. (www.georgevoland.com)

■ At the opposite end of the age spectrum from Phil Wilson and George Voland is another trombonist who is swiftly making his mark on the New York City jazz scene, **JONATHAN VOLTZOK**. The 25-year old Israeli native has been living in New York City since 2004, and has quickly proven to be an important new jazz voice on the trombone. His roots are in the bebop tradition, and his initial album ***More to Come (Kol Yo Records - 0001)*** reflects his affinity for that school of jazz. Aaron Goldberg on piano, Barak Mori on bass and Ali Jackson on drums aid him in this endeavor. Trombonist Slide Hampton and alto saxophonist Antonio Hart are present on two tracks each. The program consists of five

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OTHER VIEWS *continued from page 41*

Voltzok originals plus the jazz standards "Con Alma" by Dizzy Gillespie, "Round Midnight" by Thelonious Monk, "Opus de Funk" by Horace Silver, and "Shawnuff" by Gillespie and Charlie Parker. That is pretty heavy compositional company, but several of Voltzok's tunes have the potential to have considerable life outside of this album. Voltzok is a facile player who consistently keeps things interesting. He has chosen a flat out terrific rhythm section to abet his efforts. Of course, having Hampton and Hart contributing is a major plus. This may be Voltzok's first album as a leader, but it surely will not be his last. (www.voltzok.com)

■ I was aware of Chris Hopkins as a fine jazz piano player, so you can imagine my surprise when a CD arrived in the mail by a group billed as **ECHOES OF SWING** that features Hopkins on alto sax with Bolin T. Dawson on trumpet and vocals, Bernd Lhotzky on piano and Oliver Mewes on drums. I was even more surprised when a bit of research revealed that this group was founded in Germany in 1997, and has two previous albums. It just goes to show that there is a lot of good jazz being played in many places remote from the good old US of A. The album currently under consideration is titled **4 Jokers in the Pack (Echoes of Swing - 4505)**, and it is a pure delight. These cats specialize in playing songs from the 1920s and 1930s, but their take on them is as fresh as tomorrow. The instrumentation is unusual, but effective. Each of the players has a sound and personality that is perfectly suited to the music that they play. There are 17 songs included on the disc. The four originals, one by each band member, fit nicely in with the vintage material that comprises the balance of the program. The most familiar songs are "Royal Garden Blues," "Some Other Spring," "Happy Feet," "June in January" and "I'll Get By," the latter two having charming vocals by Dawson. When they decide to explore Ellingtonia, they opt for relatively obscure pieces like "Congo Brava" by Ellington and Juan Tizol, "Lament for Javanette" by Billy Strayhorn and Barney Bigard, and "Dancers in Love," a movement from Ellington's Perfume Suite. I will definitely seek out the earlier albums from this nifty combo. (www.echoes-of-swing.de)

■ While there have been exceptions like Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn, Ira Gershwin, Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein, II, the composers of the Great American Songbook have generally garnered more public recognition than their lyricists, the songwriters often being credited by reference to the composer's name. One consequence of this has been that wonderful lyric craftsmen like Ned Washington, Johnny Burke, and a plethora of others have toiled profitably, but in relative obscurity. I suppose that there are several factors at play here. Most songs, especially in jazz contexts, are often performed as instrumentals. Gershwin was forever paired in the minds of the public with his brother George, while Hart and Hammerstein had their names inextricably tied with that of composer Richard Rodgers, even though Hammerstein had much success with the likes of Sigmund Romberg and Jerome Kern prior to his partnership with Rodgers. Mercer, even though he probably worked with more different composers than any other major lyricist, was a personality in his own right, having had much success as a singer. Cahn was a relentless self-promoter, closely associated with Frank Sinatra, who had most of his success with two composers, Jule Styne and Jimmy Van Heusen. Most lyricists, however, worked with enough different composers that they did not get their names associated in the public's mind with a particular other name. It was nice therefore, to receive **Love is the Thing (Man in the Moon - 1)**, an album of songs with lyrics by Ned Washington performed by vocalist **SHARON PAIGE** with support from an outstanding group of jazz musicians led by pianist Keith Ingham. These players include Glen Drewes on trumpet, Bob Kindred on tenor sax, Vinnie Riccitelli on alto sax and flute, Al Gafa on guitar, John Beal on bass and Steve Little on drums. Paige has a warm voice, at times reminiscent of Lee Wiley.

There are 19 selections that include such familiar titles as "A Hundred Years from Today," "A Woman's Intuition," "Stella by Starlight," "Ghost of a Chance," "The Nearness of You," "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," "Green Dolphin Street," "High Noon," "When You Wish Upon a Star," "Can't We Talk It Over" and "My Foolish Heart." Among the other songs are some real gems that deserve more exposure, especially "Love Is the Thing," and a favorite of mine, "Reach for Tomorrow," written for a forgettable film noir, "Let No Man Write My Epitaph," in which it was wonderfully sung by Ella Fitzgerald. This is a delightful album that shines a light on a superb lyricist, and a vocalist who has made a terrific debut album. (www.paigesings.com)

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— Scott Yanow, Jazz Critic and Author

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WHOLE JAZZ

Local Whole Foods stores recently sponsored a free jazz festival for their customers, with a total of 10 acts appearing in the Café of their West Orange store and on the patio of the Montclair market over two weekends in October.

Guitarists Lenny Argese and Ed Laub opened the Sunday set in Montclair in a program of standards and easy bossa novas, with vocals by Laub, that warmed the chilly air. Passersby smiled and nodded their heads in rhythm to the music and many stopped to listen. Among those who settled in at one of the patio's table for the full set was jazz trumpeter and local resident Ted Curson.



Armistice Ball a Tribute to Times Past

Photos by Linda Lobdell



On Saturday November 8, 40-plus attendees got an afternoon introduction to ragtime-era dances from Raritan instructors Jan and Al Seabra, shown here demonstrating a "Yale Flip."

In the evening at the Armistice Ball in Clifton, war veterans were invited forward (bandleader Vince Giordano among them) for the playing of taps by Andy Schumm. Poet John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" was recited by Elizabeth Cherry.

At the Ball, cards posted on an easel announced each dance as Foxtrot, Blues, Tango, Waltz, or One-Step. Swing dancers in the crowd were interested to experience this much more formal style of dance. Vintage dance enthusiasts came from far and wide — Long Island, Hammonton NJ, Pennsylvania. Some study Civil War era dancing, or specialize in Victorian, adhering to strict stylistic distinctions of even a few years. Military uniforms of any period were encouraged. Some gents wore period tailcoats, and the women's dresses and hair ornaments dazzled.

The event benefited the Morris County Historical Society at Acorn Hall (www.acornhall.org) and was co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Vintage Dance & Social Club, dedicated to keeping alive the pastimes of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

For more info on period clothing: www.vintagevictorian.com, www.costumegallery.com, www.fashion-era.com.



The Metropolitan Club Orchestra consisted of Vince Giordano, bass; Dan Levinson clarinet; Andy Schumm, cornet; David Sager, trombone; Ken Salvo, banjo; and Sue Fischer, drums. The music buoyed dancers on the atmosphere of another time.



Kim Kelly of New Hampshire escorted Cindy Shamp, an all-eras dancer from Clifton.



OTHER VIEWS

continued from page 42

■ New Jersey based vocalist **KAREN EGERT** has just released her second album, ***That Thing Called Love*** and it is full of good singing, fine tunes, and great playing by Harry Allen on tenor sax, John Pizzarelli and Bucky Pizzarelli on guitars, Tony Monte on piano, Linc Milliman on bass and Tony Tedesco on drums. The arrangements for the 14-song program were the result of a cooperative effort by Egert and Monte who are longtime musical partners. Egert has a nice jazz feeling to her singing, with a consistent swing undercurrent present, even on ballads. Most of the 14-song program is comprised of familiar tunes, but she mostly avoids overdone items, rather favoring selections like "All or Nothing At All," "I Keep Coming Back to Joe's," "That Ole Devil Called Love," and "In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning." *That Thing Called Love* is a thing called a winner. (www.karenegert.com)

■ **Soon (OMS Records – 920)** by **AMANDA CARR** is one of those albums that feels right from the very beginning right through to the last notes. This Boston-based vocalist is right on in her renderings of 12 pop and jazz standards. She sounds like the kind of vocalist that you might have seen singing in the club that was a central part of the old *Peter Gunn* television series if Lola Albright had not been already on the scene. The tunes are wonderfully chosen, as is the band consisting of Arnie Krakowsky on tenor sax, John Wilkins on guitar, Bronek Suchanek on bass, Kenny Hadley on drums and percussion. The tracks that really stood out for me were "Easy Street," "Soon," "Flamingo," "Funny (Not Much)," and a killer "Good Bait." Amanda Carr is not a newcomer to the jazz vocal scene, but this is my first exposure to her artistry. I shall make sure that it is not my last. (www.originalmusic.com)

■ ***It's Happenin' (Zoho – 200803)*** is the third recording from vocalist **PEREZ**, and it is a very hip outing. Perez is originally from New York City, but has lived on the West Coast, and in Europe, where she got her start as a jazz vocalist. Now back in New York City, she surrounded herself with a super group of musicians for her first release on a U.S. label. The cats supporting her on *It's Happenin'* are Steve Davis on trombone, Ron Horton on trumpet, Jed Levy on tenor sax and flute, David Hazeltine on piano, Nat Reeves on bass and Joe Farnsworth on drums. She opens with the lyrics that British jazz singer Anita Wardell penned for Herbie Hancock's "Will You Still Be There." This immediately gives notice that this is a lady who is full of jazz roots. If there are any doubts left, all you have to do is go to track five and hear how she handles the Annie Ross lyrics on "Farmers Market," a classic from Art Farmer, or you might try track seven where she assuredly assays the words that Giacomo Gates laid on "Milestones." There are also some standards along the way like "Blame It on My Youth," "In the Wee Small Hours," "Detour Ahead," "Nature Boy" and "Perdido." Perez is an assertive vocalist, with strong pipes, and a knowing way with a lyric. Simply said, she is the kind of singer that one rarely encounters these days, one who shows no signs of having been influenced by rock, "American Idol" histrionics, or singer-songwriter style super sensitivity, only a real feeling for jazz and how to use that sensibility as a singer. *It's Happenin'* is definitely happenin'. (www.zohomusic.com)

■ It seems that I get several albums to review by female vocalists for every one that I receive by a male vocalist. It is a pleasure, therefore, to come upon an album like ***Take Me Anywhere (Fallen Apple)*** by **MARCUS GOLDHABER**. This is his second release. (His previous disc, *The Moment After*, was reviewed in the January 2007 issue of *Jersey Jazz*.) Jon Davis on piano, Martin Wind on bass and Marcello Pellitteri on drums and percussion provide the instrumental support. Goldhaber has compiled a 17-song program that includes six originals by him and Davis spread among 11 evergreens. The original tunes show that

Goldhaber and Davis have promise as a songwriting team, but there are no new tunes here that jump out as potential standards. The lyrics tend to be a bit on the cutesy side, and stringing four of these efforts in a row takes a bit of momentum out of the album. Goldhaber's singing is appealing, soft, sincere and nicely phrased, but he needs to show that he is comfortable moving into faster tempos if he wants to find a following on the jazz scene. This is a nice album, but one that aches for more liveliness. (www.marcusgoldhaber.com)

CDs from the NJJS inventory are \$16 each for single discs, and \$26 for two-disc sets. Shipping is \$2 for the first CD, and \$1 for each additional CD. Orders should be sent to Jon Sinkway, 43 Windham Place, Glen Rock, NJ 07452. There is a terrific selection of CDs in the NJJS inventory. The list of titles can be viewed on the "NJJS Store" page of our website (www.njjs.org). There is also an order form that can be downloaded from the site. **J**



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Caught in the Act

By Joe Lang
NJJS Music Committee Chair

Marlene VerPlanck

Le Dôme at The Manor, South Orange, NJ
October 16, 2008

With Johnny Mercer's centenary year coming up in 2009, there will surely be several concerts and events dedicated to his memory. There was a preview of this celebratory period when Marlene VerPlanck took the stage at Le Dôme in South Orange on October 16. The powers that be will be hard pressed to find a more glorious and heartfelt remembrance of the lyrical genius of Mr. Mercer from Savannah than the one presented on this evening by VerPlanck and her trio of Tedd Firth on piano, Steve LaSpina on bass and Rich DeRosa on drums.

It is an oddity of the world of vocalizing that certain singers seem to have a natural affinity for the output of a particular songwriter, and Marlene VerPlanck is probably the premier interpreter of the lyrics of Johnny Mercer. In 1979, VerPlanck made an album titled *Marlene VerPlanck Loves Johnny Mercer* (Audiophile – 138). It was released on CD in 1988 with some additional tracks bringing the program up to 21 selections, and has continued to be one of the best selling albums on the label. Her show at Le Dôme included 16 of the songs that were on the album plus an additional nine tunes, including four in her opening medley.

Among Mercer's many achievements were the 18 Academy Award nominations that he received for Best Song between the years 1938 and 1971. He won the Oscar on four occasions, and the four songs so honored, "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe," "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening," "Moon River" and "The Days of Wine and Roses," comprised the lively opening for VerPlanck's show. A strange coincidence is the fact that the composers of all four of these songs had a first name beginning with the letter "H," Harry Warren in the first

Mercer has probably written lyrics for the three best saloon songs of all time, "One for My Baby (And One More for the Road)" (Arlen), "Empty Tables" (Van Heusen), and "Drinking Again," the one that VerPlanck performed on this occasion with just the right touch of sadness.

instance, Hoagy Carmichael for the second, and Henry Mancini for the latter two. She followed this up with the first song for which Mercer and composer Harry Warren, were nominated in 1938, "Jeepers Creepers."

One of the most amazing aspects of Mercer's lengthy career was the number of collaborators he had. Among his major collaborations were those with Harold Arlen, Jerome Kern, Hoagy Carmichael, Harry Warren, Rube Bloom and Henry Mancini. All of these gentlemen and many more were represented in VerPlanck's show. As she proceeded through the evening, we heard "I Remember You" (Victor Schertzinger), "I Thought About You" (Jimmy Van Heusen), "That Old Black Magic" (Arlen), "Fools Rush In" (Bloom), "P.S. I Love You" (Gordon Jenkins), "Dearly Beloved" (Kern), "I'm Old Fashioned" (Kern), "The Summer Wind" (Hans Bradke, Henry Mayer), "Midnight Sun" (Lionel Hampton, Sonny Burke), "Early Autumn" (Ralph Burns, Woody Herman), "Let's Take the Long Way Home" (Arlen), "Drinking Again" (Doris Tauber), "Trav'lin Light" (Trummy Young, Jimmy Munday), "Namely You" (Gene DePaul), "My Shining Hour" (Arlen), "How Do You Say Auf Wiedersehen?" (Tony Scibetta), "Something's Gotta Give" (Mercer), "I Wanna Be in Love Again" (Mercer), "I Wanna Be Around" (Sadie Vimmerstedt), "SkyLark" (Carmichael), and "Day In Day Out" (Bloom).

This was an impressive lineup of songs, and VerPlanck made each of them seem like her very own. The arrangements by Billy VerPlanck, and the exemplary execution by her trio, provided VerPlanck with the perfect settings for her interpretive powers. The piano artistry of Tedd Firth was a distinct

pleasure throughout the evening, but it was never more evident than when he provided the sole backing for "Fools Rush In." Like all good accompanists, he enhances the singer's performance, but never dominates or gets in the way. When the evening is over, however, you realize just how much he has added to the performance. LaSpina and DeRosa are similarly supportive, just what the doctor ordered as the old saying goes.

It is almost unfair to single out highlights, but when she settled onto a high stool and rendered "Let's Take the Long Way Home," you felt that you were in a scene from a film noir movie, and it was special. Mercer has probably written lyrics for the three best saloon songs of all time, "One for My Baby (And One More for the Road)" (Arlen), "Empty Tables" (Van Heusen), and "Drinking Again," the one that VerPlanck performed on this occasion with just the right touch of sadness, and with Firth perfectly capturing the mood of Mercer's lyrics.

Mercer only attempted writing lyrics for a few Broadway shows, the most successful of which was *Li'l Abner*. From this show, VerPlanck sang "Namely You," a song that has become a staple of her repertoire. While it was not written for a show, and is one of his more obscure songs, "I Wanna Be in Love Again" seems at times like a Cole Porter pastiche. VerPlanck simply nailed the witty Mercer lyric.

When "Day In Day Out" terminated the show, the audience rose, and honored VerPlanck and her trio with a standing ovation. It was a fitting response to a marvelous tribute to one of the great men of American popular music.

Jazz Rocks in Arizona

By Sandy Ingham

Sedona, Arizona. Has a nice ring to it.

Sedona is in fact surrounded by spectacular red rock formations looming up 1,000 feet or more, interspersed with evergreen-studded cream-colored limestone hills. These make for dramatic backdrops for the annual six-day Sedona on the Rocks jazz festival.

The focus for much of the 27th annual festival September 23 – 28 was on home-grown talent, and there is an abundance, from a high school all-star band drawn from all over the state to numerous Sedona-area small groups that played a variety of styles in a variety of settings, outdoors and indoors.

Suffice to say, jazz lovers could undoubtedly enjoy a visit to this resort city with its many upscale restaurants and bars even during the other 51 weeks of the year.

The main event took place Saturday, when several nationally known performers took turns on a stage erected on a golf course. Headliners were Bobby Hutcherson, Giacomo Gates and Tony Monaco, with Kenny Werner whetting appetites in two concert sets Friday evening.

Hutcherson, who received a lifetime achievement award inscribed in red rock from the nonprofit festival, delivered a quartet set that wafted like a cool breeze over the 1,500 or so listeners who had baked under a 90-degree sun all day.

The onetime hard bop pioneer, now 67, has mellowed over the years, mixing his high-energy selections with exquisite ballads like “I Thought About You” and “What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life.” He wields just two mallets now rather than the fashionable four, but his shimmering notes are so carefully chosen that less is indeed more.

Hutcherson saved a surprise for the end: a glittering medium-tempo “Jitterbug Waltz,” tipping his hat to the great Fats Waller. Then, “I’ll Be Seeing You” with a brief sampling of “Giant Steps” serving as a bow to John Coltrane, one of the vibist’s early inspirations.

In the preceding set, baritone bopster Giacomo Gates sang, backed by a quartet featuring tenor saxophonist Doug Lawrence.

Gates, a disciple of scat singer extraordinaire Eddie Jefferson, favors offbeat tunes like the crowd-pleasing “Benny’s From Heaven” and “I’m Hungry,” a gastronomic tour of the world. He emulated



When the kids acknowledge unfamiliarity with Bird, Dizzy and Monk, [Giacomo Gates] commanded: “Right after school, go out and buy all their CDs.”

Jefferson’s vocalized version of a famous Charlie Parker solo on a “Lady Be Good” recording, and displayed his own compositional skills on “Melodious Funk,” a lament over lost love, and “If I Were You I’d Love Me.”

Whereas Hutcherson never mentioned song titles, Gates made a point of identifying them, citing composers and relating anecdotes about their histories. More jazzmen should be so informative.

Earlier in the week, I watched Gates perform at a local middle school, introducing several hundred youngsters to the joys of jazz. He described the structure of the blues, defined improvisation as playing spontaneously while following a familiar road map and illustrated how new melodies are created using the chord progressions of older ones.

He also assigned homework: When the kids acknowledge unfamiliarity with Bird, Dizzy and Monk, he commanded: “Right after school, go out and buy all their CDs.”

The students did roar for more when Gates asked if they wanted encores. Then came

some terrific and totally unrehearsed three-voice harmony with local sopranos Susannah Martin and Jeanie Carroll; too bad they didn’t reprise that on the big stage Saturday.

B-3 Hammond organist Tony Monaco led a trio in vibrant tributes to his mentors, the recently passed Jimmy Smith and Jimmy McGriff. Monaco punctuates his electrifying blues licks with shouts of encouragement to sidemen as he piles riff after right-hand riff while his left hand sustains a note that rises to the intensity of a scream.

Monaco mined subtler veins with “I’ll Close My Eyes,” a ballad he played at Smith’s funeral, and in a closing blues during which he squeezed his big sound down to whisper level before kicking it back up to a rousing finish.

Kenny Werner was, like Gates, an artist in residence. He lectured one afternoon about his new book, “Effortless Mastery,” advice on how musicians and others can tap into their creativity — or “get into the zone.”

The next evening, Werner and his trio were in that zone, playing as waning sunlight filtered through blue and lavender stained glass in the ceiling of the Creative Life Center. The pianist was in dazzling form on a diverse set that drew on J.S. Bach and Eric Clapton (the elegiac “Tears in Heaven”) among others. Werner’s own composing

skills were amply displayed on “Jackson Five,” a wide-ranging ode to painter Jackson Pollock.

The festival opened with a special showing of the new documentary “Trying to Get Better — The Jazz Odyssey of Jack Sheldon.” The Los Angeles-based trumpeter, singer and comedian, now 77, is a complex man, and the film captures his many facets with interviews from people who know him well, including celebs Merv Griffin, Clint Eastwood and Dom DeLuise. There are also generous scenes of Sheldon playing and singing with great sensitivity, then regaling audiences with hilarious, often off-color, humor.

More than a dozen Sedona-area bands were showcased at a posh arts and crafts “village”

and at other locations during the week. Among those that caught my ear:

■ Bedouin Jazz, a sextet that specialized in Middle Eastern sounds but that roamed far and wide for other world beats. It boasted an array of exotic instruments.

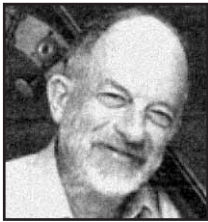
■ Busker Eaton, a trio whose name accurately conveys an affinity for playfulness. But novelty numbers are offset by deep blue grooves etched by an ultra-funky-sounding electronic keyboard.

■ The Eric Miller Band, a quartet led by guitar whizzes Eric and Robin Miller. The leader’s sensuous tenor vocals led authenticity to the Brazilian- and Mexican-inspired repertoire.

■ The Duncan-Murnihan band, with aforementioned singer Susannah Martin radiating joy on blues and Latin numbers.

Jazz on the Rocks served up several jazz-accompanied dinners and after-hour jam sessions, a patrons’ party and a Sunday brunch. Festival proceeds go toward scholarships and other music education programs. JJ

Sandy Ingham is Jersey Jazz’s roving reporter.



From the Crow’s Nest

By Bill Crow

When Jim Hall was on the road with Chico Hamilton’s group, he discovered that Woody Herman’s band was staying at their hotel. Jim had breakfast one day with Vince Guaraldi and Bill Harris, who were with Woody at the time. Vince talked about playing in New York with the band. Woody’s bassist, Chubby Jackson, had told Vince he could save some money by staying with him at his mother’s house. Vince slept the first night on an uncomfortable couch, but Chubby had told him there was a spare mattress in the attic. When he awoke in the morning, he decided not to wait for Chubby, and headed for the attic to get the mattress. Being unfamiliar with attic construction, he didn’t realize that between the beams was just the plasterboard ceiling of the room below. Vince stepped there, broke through the ceiling, and found himself back on the couch again, surrounded by broken plasterboard. He said Chubby nearly had a heart attack when he found him there. JJ

Bill Crow is a freelance musician and writer. His articles and reviews have appeared in Down Beat, 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 story is excerpted, with permission, from Bill’s column, The Band Room in Allegro, the monthly newsletter of A.F. of M. Local 802.

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A Pacifistic "Battle of the Bands"

By Jim Gerard

The battle of the bands is a concept that emerged during the Jazz Age, reached its apex in the Swing Era and its nadir at every high school mixer in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The annals of jazz are filled with such epic contests: Cab Calloway vs. Chick Webb, Count Basie vs. Jimmy Lunceford, the Savoy Sultans vs. all comers. But in today's jazz world, the paucity of working big bands encourages less combat and more mutual appreciation. At least that's what Wynton Marsalis conveyed in his prefatory remarks to an October 25 concert that featured the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra "hosting" the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra. Marsalis emphasized that this was to be no old school battle. Instead, he said that there are so few big bands today that "when we see each other, we don't feel like fighting; we want to hug."

This circle-the-wagons aesthetic approach proved to be no hindrance to either of these first-rate ensembles, as they cruised through an evening of thorny modern titles, ballads and lots of blues — taking orchestral turns, exchanging soloists and combining forces in the second set that echoed (sometimes literally) the famous *The Count Meets the Duke* LP.

The JALC Orchestra opened the concert with altoist Ted Nash's arrangement of Joe Henderson's "Inner Urge," a characteristic JALC performance whose soulful execution masked its virtuosic intricacies and time changes. It featured two sterling choruses by Nash and a Marsalis solo behind which first the reeds, then the brass, laid out.

John Clayton (one of the leaders of the Clayton-Hamilton organization, along with his brother, altoist Jeff, and drummer Jeff Hamilton) conducted his composition, "I Be Serious 'Bout Dem Blues," punctuating the numerous solos with exaggerated conductor's gestures and a series of fey dance steps at the

conclusion. Early on, this listener was formulating distinctions between the two orchestras: that JALC ran like a well-oiled cruiser, its swing solid but light, while the CHJO upped the dynamics and blasted its way through its book like a battleship.

But just to confound the listener, the CHJO then segued into an airy, sensitive interpretation of Johnny Mandel's "Emily," which John Clayton opened and closed with lovely arco solos, his plangent bass caressing the melody.

The next turn belonged to Marsalis, who chose "Holy Ghost," from his jazz mass *Abyssinian 200*, his muted trumpet growling while drummer Ali Jackson encircled the band beating on a tambourine.

Wayne Shorter's "Infant Eyes," arranged by Marsalis, reached fever pitch with piercing solos by trumpeters Printup and Jones and concluded with a breathy recapitulation of the melody by baritonist Joe Temperley.

"Cool Strut," a Sonny Clarke blues, was assayed by JALC like a number from Basie's "New Testament" band. In other words, it made you want to tap not only *your* feet, but those of the guy sitting next to you.

Before the CHJO launched into Johnny Hodges's "Squatty Roo," preceded by a

89-year-old Snooky Young received a standing ovation, and one only wished for the opportunity to ask him how he has managed to transcend the limitations of space-time.

frenetic tour-de-force drum solo by Hamilton, John Clayton paused to link jazz past and present by introducing his lead trumpeter, Eugene "Snooky" Young, who at 89, is — astonishingly — still driving the trumpet section of a world-class big band, just as he did 60 years ago with Jimmy Lunceford and later with Basie. Young received a standing ovation, and one only wished for the opportunity to ask him how he has managed to transcend the limitations of space-time.

continued on page 50

Photos by Frank Stewart for Jazz at Lincoln Center





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BATTLE OF THE BANDS *continued from page 48*



Jim Gerard is an author and journalist who has written profiles of Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton, Benny Carter and other jazz notables. jgerard@nyc.rr.com; 917-609-1574.

In the second set, the bands intermingled, playing together en masse, exchanging solos and soloists. Marsalis related an anecdote he'd heard from a musician who'd played with Woody Herman on a date where Herman's band — presumably as some sort of stunt — exchanged books with Ellington's. "He said it was the worst thing you ever heard," intimating to jazz cognoscenti that the Hermanites were at a disadvantage when trying to play the Duke's music, toward which the Duke had notoriously eccentric methods of notation.

The two bands combined for John Clayton's "Ragablues," with the leader bowing first, followed by Marsalis playing an intriguing, off-kilter line, a solo by JALC's whiz-kid pianist Dan Nipper, both bands' trombonists' trading eights, and the JALC Orchestra ripping off jagged, staccato lines.

"Movement XII" from Marsalis's *Victoria Suite* opened with a lovely clarinet solo by JALC's Victor Goines, followed by a chorus

from Clayton-Hamilton plectrist Graham Dechter, a JALC ensemble passage and another neat Nipper solo.

John Clayton told the crowd that he was lucky enough to play with Count Basie, and presented the next number, "Captain Bill," as a tribute that incorporated bits and pieces of well-known Count repertoire such as "One O'Clock Jump," like a Basie mosaic. One of the highlights: contrabasses at 15 paces between JALC's Carlos Henriquez and CHJO's Christoph Luty.

The Basie motif continued with Thad Jones's exquisite ballad "To You," along with the concluding show-stopper, Frank Wess's "Battle Royale," both of which were written for the Ellington-Basie band mashup record.

While a little more musical pugilism might've added an edge to the proceedings, these two sterling aggregations are a reminder that the jazz big band, while an endangered species, is far from extinct. **J**

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October Member Meeting **Ladies' Choice**




Story and photos
by Tony Mottola



The NJJS October Member Meeting presented three popular female singers — Laura Hull, Carrie Jackson and Pam Purvis — in a program that explored jazz vocal styles and artistic choices. Backed by a trio led by pianist Tomoko Ohno, the three vocalists presented five well-known standards with each singer taking a different approach to the same song.

And so the opening tune, Ned Washington and Hoagy Carmichael's "The Nearness of You," was presented a la bossa nova by Pam, in swing by Carrie, and in its more common ballad setting by Laura. "Day by Day," "Time After Time," "That's All," and "Autumn Leaves" all received similar treatment over two enjoyable sets with swing, bop, Latin, blues and other stylistic variations coming into the mix (unfortunately however,

no polkas or cha-cha-chás).

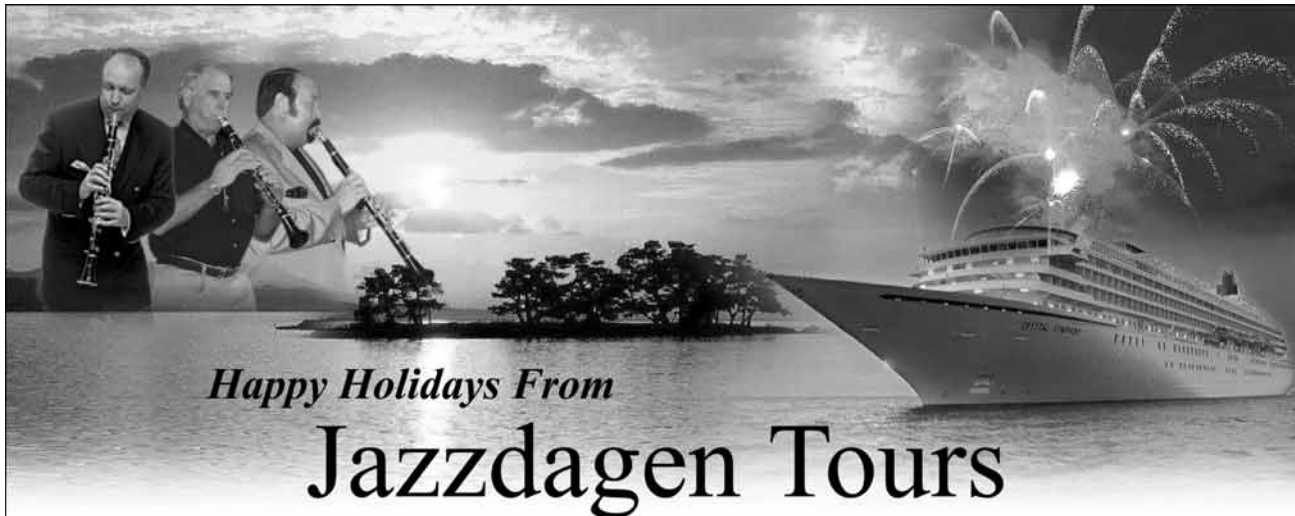
The performance at Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair also included a fiery run through "Recuerdo Bossa Nova" by Ohno with bassist Steve Freeman and drummer Gordon Lane to open the afternoon's second set. After the music, the trio of singers held a roundtable discussion and Q&A with the audience and several door prizes were awarded, including a pair of klezmer band concert tickets and two all-access weekend passes to the Cape May Jazz Festival. 



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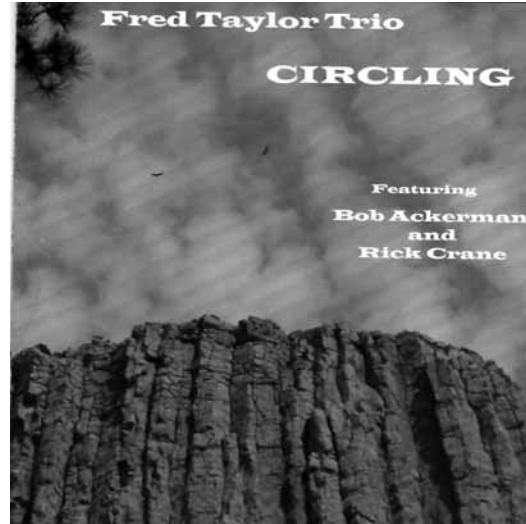
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Trying to Get Good

October's Film Series Installment

NJJS members and friends on October 22 got a panoramic look at the life and work of trumpeter and vocalist Jack Sheldon with the screening of a new biographical film about this living legend: *Trying to Get Good: The Jazz Odyssey of Jack Sheldon*. Full of surprises (especially if you've never seen babies swim underwater!), moving insights, uproarious laughter and great music, the film is making the rounds at festivals and the DVD is now available for purchase.

Visit www.TryingToGetGood.com.



Members Making Music

Circling by the Fred Taylor Trio

“The essence of jazz is the player,” says NJJS member Fred Taylor and the spare, piano-less trio on his new CD offers ample room for three skillful players to ply their artful trade. The progressive but musical disk features six originals by fellow Jazz Society member Bob Ackerman among the CD’s eight tracks. Veteran bassist Rick Crane rounds out the trio. More information is available at www.fredtaylormusic.com.

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MUSIC COMMITTEE

continued from page 8

Danny Tobias. Prices, details on the bands and the schedule will be provided in future columns.

■ **Jazzfest will be returning to Drew University in Madison in 2009, with the dates being Friday, June 5 and Saturday, June 6.** Once again, we will welcome sanofi-aventis as our major sponsor. RexCorp Realty has also committed to provide significant sponsorship funds for 2009. As I mentioned last month, we’ve reformatted Jazzfest to a single Saturday schedule, with a free Friday evening concert spotlighting some of the outstanding high school bands from New Jersey. By increasing the presence of outside vendors, and adding some programming in the Black Box Theatre specifically designed for children, it is our expectation that this format will make the event more appealing to the general public, and more family friendly. On Saturday, there will be an afternoon session with bands playing in the tent and Concert Hall. A second session will be held in the tent during the evening, with two bands being featured. The Music Committee will now address the selection of talent for Jazzfest, and I hope to have some news to report next month about the lineup.

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 new three-years-for-\$100 membership.)

Renewed Members

Louana & Frances Adler,* Caldwell, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Amada, Whiting, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Douglas G. Baird, Wayne, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Frank Bellina,* Staten Island, NY
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Bienkowski,* Dover, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Brautigam, Avon-by-the-Sea, NJ
 Mrs. Philip Brody, Whippany, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. C. Graham Burton, Ridgefield, CT
 Mr. & Mrs. Scott R. Calvert,* Pequannock, NJ
 Mr. Russell B. Chase, Kendall Park, NJ
 Mr. Charles H. Daly, Atlantic Highlands, NJ
 Ms. Beverly DeGraaf, Morristown, NJ
 Mrs. Helen R. Dodge, Hillsborough, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. William H. Earnest, Warwick, NY
 Mr. Ben Friedrich,* Osterville, MA
 Mrs. Barbara Giordano, Green Brook, NJ
 Ms. Faith Giovino, Bound Brook, NJ
 Mr. Leroy P. Heely, Brunswick ME
 Ms. Lauren Hooker, Teaneck, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Huening, Jr., Niskayuna NY
 Ms. Laura Hull, Morris Plains, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Burt Hunton, Old Tappan, NJ
 Mr. Jack Jeker, Dover, NJ
 Mr. Josh Katz, Boynton Beach, FL
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard R. Knittel,* South Portland, ME
 Mr. Boris Kwaloff,* Montclair, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Leone,* Lakewood, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Maag, Parsippany, NJ
 Mr. John J. Maimone, North Plainfield, NJ
 Mr. Karl N. Marx, Morristown, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Herbert R. Meisel, Springfield, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Dick Meldonian,* Haworth, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard H. Miller, New York NY
 Mr. & Mrs. John Mintz, Rockaway, NJ
 The Montclair Free Public Library, Montclair, NJ
 Mr. Robert W. Moore, Stockholm, NJ

Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel H. Morison, III, Middleburg, VA
 Mr. & Mrs. William F. Murray, West Hartford, CT
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Olson, Chatham, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Arthur O'Neal,* Flemington, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Allen Parmet, Springfield, NJ
 Dr. William J. Passet, Creskill, NJ
 Mr. James Penders, Madison, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Donald E. Perlman,* Succasunna, NJ
 Mr. C. Douglas Phillips, Kenilworth, NJ
 Dr. Charles S. Polak, Oxford, NJ
 Mr. Roy Adamson Rogers, III,* West Chester, PA
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Root, Madison, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward Rosen, Morristown, NJ
 Dr. Jesse Rosenthal, West Orange, NJ
 Rutgers U.-Alexander Library-SPCOL, New Brunswick, NJ
 Mr. Michael A. Sebastiani, Princeton, NJ
 Ms. Penny Sing, East Windsor, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Bud Smith, Somerset, NJ
 Mr. Don Jay Smith, Lebanon, NJ
 Mr. Andrew J. Sordoni III,* Forty Fort, PA
 Mr. William R. Spillers, West Orange, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Tom Stemmler, Piscataway, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Phil Stout,* Glen Gardner, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. B. & H. Strauss, Bay Harbor FL
 Mr. & Mrs. Jay Toor,* Basking Ridge, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Billy Ver Planck, Clifton, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Alfred R. White, Jr., Pine Bluff, AR
 Mr. Marshall Wolf, New York NY
 Mr. Robert Young, Plainfield, NJ
 Mr. Ben Zweig, Randolph, NJ

New Members

Dr. Raymond Addabbo, Teaneck, NJ
 Ms. Ruth Aguilar, Secaucus, NJ
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Banas, Hillsborough, NJ
 Ms. Janet Bloom, Cortlandt Manor NY
 Mr. Michael Grabas, Cedar Grove, NJ
 Ms. Betty Liste, Wyckoff, NJ
 Mr & Mrs. James Swale, Cranbury, NJ
 Mr. Gil Zweig, Morris Plains, NJ

About NJJS

The New Jersey Jazz Society is dedicated to the performance, promotion and preservation of jazz. Founded in 1972, the Society is run by a board of directors who meet monthly to conduct the business of staging our music festivals, awarding scholarships to deserving New Jersey college jazz studies students, conducting the Generations of Jazz programs in local school systems, and inducting pioneers and legends of jazz into the American Jazz Hall of Fame, 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, or call the HOTLINE 1-800-303-NJJS for more information on any of our PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:

- Generations of Jazz (our Jazz in the Schools Program)
- Jazzfest (summer jazz festival)
- Pee Wee Russell Memorial Stomp e-mail updates
- 'Round Jersey (Regional Jazz Concert Series):
- Ocean County College Bickford Theatre/Morris
- Student scholarships American Jazz Hall of Fame

Member Benefits

What do you get for your \$40 dues?

- **Jersey Jazz Journal** — a monthly journal considered one of 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 Member Meetings** — See www.njjs.org and *Jersey Jazz* for updates.
- **FREE Film Series** — 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 and Jazzfest. 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. Contact pres@njjs.org for a catalog.

Join NJJS

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS Member benefits are subject to update.

- **Family \$40:** See above for details.
- **NEW!! Family 3-YEAR \$100:** See above for details.
- **Youth \$20:** For people under 25 years of age. Be sure to give the year of your birth on the application where noted.
- **Give-a-Gift \$40 + \$20:** The Give-a-Gift membership costs the regular \$40 for you, plus \$20 for a gift membership. (Includes your 1-year membership and your friend's first year membership. Not available for renewals of gift memberships.)
- **Supporter (\$75 – \$99/family)**
- **Patron (\$100 – \$249/family)**
- **Benefactor (\$250 – \$499/family)**
- **Angel \$500+/family)**

Members at Patron Level and above receive special benefits. These change periodically, so please contact Membership for details.

To receive a membership application, for more information or to join:

Contact Membership Chair Caryl Anne McBride at **973-366-8818** or membership@njjs.org

OR visit www.njjs.org

OR simply send a check payable to "NJJS" to:
 NJJS Membership, PO Box 410, Brookside, NJ 07926-0410.

Morris Jazz

The Bickford Theater at the Morris Museum
Morristown, NJ 07960
Tickets/Information: 973-971-3706



Keith Inham with Nancy Nelson.

This issue might arrive in time for you to come to **Rio Clemente's** concert on November 24. He's invited **Bucky Pizzarelli** to join him, with **Gene Perla** on bass.

Otherwise, set aside Monday, December 1 for

Nancy Nelson's return, this time singing selections from her vast Gershwin collection — both George and Ira. The Gershwins, together and individually, are responsible for many of the most enduring songs of the premier creative era in popular music.

Nancy has been an NJJS favorite over the years, having played Jazzfest and The Pee Wee Stomp, plus being one of the few vocalists in the mostly-instrumental First Edison Jazz Party. She was the first vocalist to perform for the Wyeth Jazz Showcase and has been back several times, generally with cohesive themes such as this Gershwin assortment. Early recognition included reader poll nominations by *Downbeat* and *Playboy*. Currently she is the featured vocalist with several prominent bands in this area.

She's fortunate to have had a long association with Grammy-nominee **Keith Ingham**, a sensitive accompanist and noteworthy pianist in his own right. He's played and recorded with Maxine Sullivan and Susannah McCorkle, among other vocalists, and is heard with all-star instrumental groups featuring Bob Wilber, Marty Grosz...even Stéphané Grappelli. Wisely, Nancy always gives Keith some solo time during her concerts.

The **Midiri Barnhart Trio** would perform more often if the participants didn't live in different states. Fortunately for us, the Bickford Theatre is about midway between their residences, so they try to make an annual appearance (schedules permitting) since they derive such joy playing together. Monday, December 15 is one of those cherished occasions.

You know **Jeff Barnhart** as a seemingly carefree stride pianist who has given us several zestful solo concerts (plus duets with flutist wife Anne) over the years, including a recent visit with Paris Washboard. He is extremely active on the festival circuit, playing solos, trios and full band engage-



Midiri Barnhart Trio.
Joe Midiri, clarinet and sax;
Paul Midiri, drums, vibes
Jeff Barnhart, piano

ments with both U.S. and British groups. Finding an opening in his calendar is a challenge, so widely appreciated is his talent for music and humor.

Reed maestro **Joe Midiri** seems his polar opposite, serious about his technical mastery of clarinet and various saxophones. He leads both a big band and smaller combinations and is extremely popular, particularly among swing fans. When working with Jeff though, he becomes looser, as Jeff shows his more serious side, resulting in a performance that brings out qualities in both not seen in other settings.

Multi-instrumentalist **Paul Midiri** rounds out the trio, playing drums, vibes and even a bit of trombone, as appropriate. Occasionally he'll surprise audiences with another instrument from his collection. The three of them blend their talents to create something truly unique when together, more daring and elegant than when on their own. It's done so seamlessly that audiences might well believe they play together all the time.

The pace continues into the New Year, with **James Chirillo**, **Herb Gardner**, **Fred Vigorito**, **Bruce McNichols**, **John Gill**, **Randy Reinhart**, **Dan Levinson**, **Fred Fischer**, **Bria Skönborg**, **Noel Kaletsky** and **Jim Fryer**, among other stars, featured in the early concerts.

Jazz For Shore

NOTE temporary venue change!

**Mancini Hall, Ocean County Library
Toms River, NJ 08753
Tickets/Information: 732-255-0500**

Mancini Hall is such a cozy room (yet with lively acoustics) that it just begs to showcase a singer, so MidWeek Jazz has invited **Molly Ryan** to assemble its first vocal program there. She's a familiar quantity to fans of this series, having performed with the Palomar Quartet and other groups. As Joe Lang said of her last month, she's "a singer who has mastered the art of performing these wonderful songs in a style, and with a feeling, that captures wonderfully the spirit of the material, and the era from which it springs."



Molly Ryan

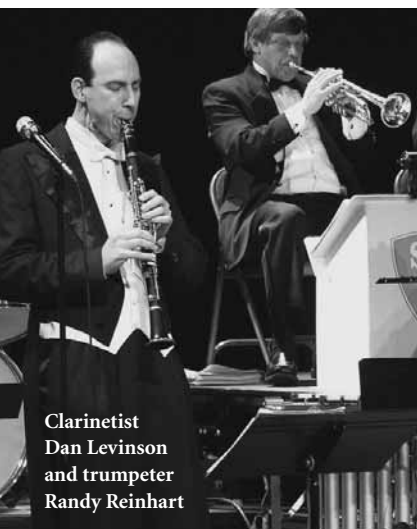
It would have been easy enough to simply draft a pianist for accompaniment, or assemble a traditional band behind her. Instead, befitting the character of the room, she's recruited an all-string rhythm section, with guitarists **Tom Landman** and **Matt Munisteri**, with **Brian Nalepka** playing string baSs. **Dan Levinson** will provide accents — and lead a few instrumental interludes — playing his collection of reeds. Count on hearing a different spin on familiar material when you come on Wednesday, December 17.

Temporary residency at the Toms River Library continues into 2009, as the renovations on the Ocean County campus are extended. These concerts start at 8 PM, run as a single 90-minute set, and cost only \$13 per seat in advance (going to \$15 at the door).

Return on Wednesday, January 14 for the **Midiri Brothers Quartet**. You'll hear **Joe Midiri** playing reeds (mostly clarinet), **Pat Mercuri** on guitar, **Ed Wise** playing string bass and brother **Paul Midiri** contributing the rest of the instrumentation on drums, vibes and trombone. They mainly have a swing orientation, but draw upon a lot of traditional material too.

An annual treat is the **GroundHog Day Jam**, this year featuring a larger than usual band, with multi-instrumentalists expanding their range still farther. **Herb Gardner** leads on piano and trombone, with **Dan Levinson** (clarinet, saxophone), **Mike Weatherly** (bass), **Robbie Scott** (drums) and **Abbie Gardner** (guitar) assisting. Most are leaders of their own groups, so this is quite an

'Round Jersey concerts are produced by Bruce M. Gast in conjunction with the New Jersey Jazz Society. Performance photos by Bruce Gast.



Clarinetist
Dan Levinson
and trumpeter
Randy Reinhart

assembly of talent. Save Wednesday, February 4 for this one, and return over the following months to hear violin star **Aaron Weinstein**, guitar legend **Bucky Pizzarelli**, West Coast trumpet virtuoso **Bria Skönberg**, perennial favorite **Jim Fryer** on trombone, and many others worth hearing.


Bridgewater Jazz at Somerset County Vo-Tech School, Bridgewater, NJ 08807 Tickets/Information: (908) 237-1235

Befitting the first celebration of Benny Goodman's centennial year, Jazz in

Bridgewater has engaged the **James Langton Big Band** to play for the anniversary of the King of Swing's historic Carnegie Hall concert on January 17. Transplanted Brit **James Langton**, who operates versions of his orchestra on both sides of the Atlantic (and a Nighthawks-type hot dance band at home), will himself be in the reed section, playing from an extensive set of Goodman arrangements he's collected over the years. **Dan Levinson** will be featured on clarinet, as he has in similar tributes in New York and Europe, as well as for the full Carnegie program recreation he did for this series a few years back.

This is truly an all-star band, with top musicians filling all the chairs. You'll recognize and enjoy familiar favorites, such as **Randy Reinhart**, **Charlie Caranicas**, **Mark Shane**, **Matt Munisteri**, **Kevin Dorn** and **Molly Ryan**. The others are veterans of previous tributes here, being featured players you've heard with top bands: **Mike Ponella** (lead trumpet with Nighthawks), **Harvey Tibbs** (West Point band), **Nik Payton** (International Reed Summit), **Mike Christianson** (TomCats), **Mike Weatherly** (Banu Gibson), **Marc Phaneuf** (Nighthawks) and **Jeff Newell** (Stan Rubin Orchestra).

Jazz in Bridgewater makes its home in the Somerset County Vo-Tech School's acoustic auditorium, with unobstructed sightlines from all seats. Plenty of parking on their Vogt Drive campus, just off North Bridge Street, adjacent to the County Library. It's just two blocks from Bridgewater Commons, the huge mall at the intersection of Route 22, Routes 202/206 and Interstate 287, with Interstate 78 a bit to the north. Most members are familiar with the location, home to jazz concerts for nearly a decade, but if not, request driving instructions when you order tickets.

From the full-page ad elsewhere in this issue, you'll see that prices have been held at the same level as last year's sellout. Best to secure your tickets soon, since this special tribute is getting national publicity. If you prefer mailing a check, send it to the SCVTS Education Foundation, PO Box 6124, Bridgewater, NJ 08807. To avoid losses in the mail, tickets will be held for pickup (express line) at the concert, unless specifically requested otherwise. 

JAZZ TRIVIA ANSWER(S)! *questions on page 4*

ALL the questions this month referred to drummer Dave Tough, so if you answered one correctly, you got them all right — the easy way.



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

calendar:

JAZZ RESEARCH ROUNDTABLES

A series of lectures and discussions. Programs are free and open to the public and take place on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 PM in the Dana Room, 4th floor, John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University, 185 University Ave., Newark, NJ. Refreshments are served. Information: 973-353-5595. Names in italics are the presenters.

■ **December 3:** *Hyland Harris:* Drummer Joe Harris

■ **January 21 2009:** *Paul Machlin:* Pianist Teddy Wilson

■ **February 11:** *David Mattock:* Dr. Lonnie Smith

■ **March 11:** *Terry Josephson:* "Cafe Society: The wrong place for the Right People"

JAZZ FROM THE ARCHIVES

Broadcast hosted by IJS Director, 2007 NEA Jazz Master Dan Morgenstern, every Sunday at 11:00 PM on WBGO Radio (88.3 FM). www.wbgo.org.

■ **November 23** – The Music of Arranger Sy Johnson: Host Bill Kirchner salutes the arranger who contributed scores to the bands of Terry Gibbs, Charles Mingus, Rod Levitt and others.

■ **November 30** – Duke's Epic Moment: Hosts Dan Morgenstern and Tad Hershorn with guest John Fass Morton, author of Backstory in Blue: Ellington At Newport '56, celebrate Duke Ellington's triumphal performance at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival.

■ **December 7** – Hardbop Grandpop: Host Bill Kirchner examines the music of pianist-composer Horace Silver.

■ **December 14** – Tiny in France, Pt.2: Host John Clement continues his survey of guitarist Tiny Grimes, playing recordings he made in France.

■ **December 21** – Annual IJS Christmas Cheer: Hosts Annie Kuebler and Vincent Pelote play holiday tunes with a jazz flavor.

■ **December 28** – Picks of the Year, Part 1: Host Dan Morgenstern (with input from Archives co-hosts) picks personal best recordings of 2008.

NEW solo piano series produced by IJS and featuring leading artists of different generations! Dana Room; 2:30-4:00 PM, FREE of charge

■ **February 4, 2009:** Geri Allen

■ **March 11:** Brandon McCune

Performance featuring Prof. Lewis Porter. Dana Room

■ **November 12, 2:30 PM:** Prof. Lewis Porter and special guests

Somewhere There's Music

You can find jazz all over the state in venues large and small. Here are just some of them.

We continually update entries. Please contact tmottola@aol.com if you know of other venues that ought to be here.

Asbury Park

JOYFUL NOISE CAFE
1400 Asbury Ave.
"JAZZ Alive Asbury Park"
second Friday each month 8 PM
\$8

TIM MCGLOONE'S SUPPER CLUB

1200 Ocean Ave.
732-744-1400
timmcloonessupperclub.com

Bayonne

THE BOILER ROOM
280 Avenue E
201-436-6700
www.arts-factory.com
Fri/Sat 10 PM; Sun 7 PM

Bernardsville

BERNARD'S INN
27 Mine Brook Road
908-766-0002
www.bernardsinn.com
Monday - Saturday 6:30 PM
Piano Bar

Bloomfield

**WESTMINSTER ARTS CENTER/
BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE**
467 Franklin St.
973-748-9000 X343

Brooklawn

BROOKLAWN AMERICAN LEGION HALL
Browning Road & Railroad Ave. 08030
856-234-5147
Tri-State Jazz Society usual venue
www.tristatejazz.org
Some Sundays 2:00 pm

Cape May

VFW POST 386
419 Congress St.
609-884-7961
usual venue for Cape May Trad Jazz Society
Some Sundays 2 PM live Dixieland
www.capemaytraditionaljazzsociety.com

Clark

LANA'S FINE DINING
1300 Raritan Rd.
732-669-9024
www.lanasfinedining.com
Warren Vaché Trio Thursdays 7-11 PM
Live jazz (rotating artists) Fridays 7-11 PM

Cherry Hill

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Rt. 70
856-234-5147
Tri-State Jazz Society occasional venue
www.tristatejazz.org
Some Sundays 2 PM

Clifton

ST. PETERS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
380 Clifton Ave.
973-546-3406
Saturdays 7:30 PM

Closter

HARVEST BISTRO & BAR
252 Schraalenburgh Road
201-750-9966
www.harvestbistro.com
Every Tuesday: Ron Affif/
Lyle Atkinson/Ronnie Zito

Cresskill

GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT
44 East Madison Ave.
201-541-7575
Every Tuesday Frank Forte solo guitar

Deal

AXELROD PAC
Jewish Community Center
732-531-9100 x 142
www.arthurtopilow.com

Edgewater

LA DOLCE VITA
270 Old River Rd.
201-840-9000

Englewood

BERGEN PAC
30 N. Van Brunt St.
201-227-1030
www.bergenpac.org

TOMASO'S RISTORANTE

163 Old River Road, 07020
(201) 941-3000

Garwood

CROSSROADS
78 North Ave.
908-232-5666
www.xxroads.com
Jam Session Tuesday 8:30 PM

Glen Rock

GLEN ROCK INN
222 Rock Road
201-445-2362
www.glenrockinn.com
Thursday 7 PM

Hackensack

SOLARI'S
61 River St.
201-487-1969
1st Tuesday 8:00 PM
Mickey Gravine Big Band
No cover

STONY HILL INN

231 Polifly Rd.
201-342-4085
www.stonyhillinn.com
Friday and Saturday evenings

Hawthorne

ALEXUS STEAKHOUSE TAVERN
80 Wagaraw Road, 07506
973-427-9200
7-10 PM
No cover
AlexusSteakhouse.com
Bucky Pizzarelli & Frank Vignola
on rotating schedule Tuesdays &
every other Thursday

Highland Park

PJ'S COFFEE
315 Raritan Avenue
732-828-2323
Sunday 1 PM Open Jam

Hillsborough

DAY'S INN
118 Route 206 South
908-685-9000
Thursday 7 PM Open Jam

Hoboken

MAXWELL'S
1039 Washington St.
201-798-0406
Every other Monday 9:00 PM
Swingadeic

Hopewell

HOPEWELL VALLEY BISTRO & INN
15 East Broad St.
609-466-9889
www.hopewellvalleybistro.com
Friday/Saturday 7 PM
Minimum \$15

Lawrenceville

FEDORA CAFE
2633 Lawrenceville Road
609-895-0844
Some Wednesdays 6:00 PM
No cover/BYOB

Little Falls

BARCA VELHA RESTAURANT/BAR
440 Main St., 07424
973-890-5056
www.barcavelha.com
Fridays 7:30 PM Bossa Brazil
No cover

Lyndhurst

WHISKEY CAFE
1050 Wall St. West, 07071
201-939-4889
www.whiskeycafe.com
One Sunday/month James Dean Orchestras
swing dance + lesson

Madison

SHANGHAI JAZZ
24 Main St.
973-822-2899
www.shanghaijazz.com
Wednesday/Thursday 7 PM
Friday/Saturday 6:30 PM
Sunday 6 PM
No cover

Maplewood

BURGDORF CULTURAL CENTER
10 Durand St.
973-378-2133
www.artsmaplewood.org

Manville

RHYTHMS OF THE NIGHT
729 S. Main Street
908-707-8757
rhythmsofthenight.net
Open jam session Wednesdays 7-10 PM

Matawan

CAFÉ 34
787 Route 34
Jazz trios Wed and Thur 8 PM
732-583-9700
www.bistro34.com

Mendham

KC'S CHIFFAFA HOUSE
5 Hilltop Road
973-543-4726
www.chiffafa.com
Live Jazz — Rio Clemente, others
Call for schedule

Metuchen

NOVITA
New & Pearl Streets
732-549-5306
Fridays 7:30 PM
No cover

Montclair

CHURCH STREET CAFE
12 Church St.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

40 South Fullerton Ave.
973-744-6560

PALAZZO RESTAURANT

11 South Fullerton Ave.
973-746-6778
Friday/Saturday 7:00 PM
Joe Licari/Larry Weiss

RICHIE CECERE'S

2 Erie Street
973-746-7811

SESAME RESTAURANT & JAZZ CLUB

398 Bloomfield Avenue
973-746-2553
sesamerestaurant.com
Jazz Evening once every month, usually
2nd or 3rd Wednesday

TRUMPETS

6 Depot Square
973-744-2600
www.trumpetsjazz.com
Tuesday/Thursday/Sunday 7:30 PM
Friday/Saturday 8:30 PM

Morris Plains

AMBROSIA RESTAURANT & BAR
650 Speedwell Ave.
973-898-1111
www.ambrosianj.com

Morristown

**THE BICKFORD THEATRE
AT THE MORRIS MUSEUM**

5 Normandy Heights Road
973-971-3706
www.morriuseum.org
Some Mondays 8:00 PM

THE COMMUNITY THEATRE

100 South St.
973-539-8008
www.mayoarts.org

HIBISCUS RESTAURANT

Best Western Morristown Inn
270 South St.
973-359-0200
www.hibiscuscuisine.com
Jazz Nights alternating Thursday & Fridays
6-9 PM

THE SIDEBAR AT THE FAMISHED FROG

18 Washington St.
973-540-9601
www.famishedfrog.com/thesidebar

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

70 Maple Avenue
973-455-0708

SUSHI LOUNGE

12 Schuyler Place
973-539-1135
www.sushilounge.com
Sunday jazz 6 PM

Mountainside

ARIRANG
1230 Route 22W
908-518-9733
Wednesday 7:30 PM

Listings are alphabetical by town. All entries are subject to change; please call each venue to confirm schedule of music.

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.

Newark

27 MIX
27 Halsey Street
973-648-9643
www.27mix.com

BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

275 Market Street
973-623-8161
www.bethany-newark.org

NEWARK MUSEUM

49 Washington St.
973-596-6550
www.newarkmuseum.org
Summer Thursday afternoons

NJPAC

1 Center St.
888-466-5722
www.njpac.org

THE PRIORY

233 West Market St.
973-242-8012
Friday 7:00 PM
No cover

SAVOY GRILL

60 Park Place
973-286-1700
www.thesavoygrillnewark.com

SKIPPER'S PLANE STREET PUB

304 University Ave.
973-733-9300
www.skippersplanestreetpub.com

New Brunswick

DELTA'S

19 Dennis St.
732-249-1551

MAKEDA ETHIOPIAN RESTAURANT

338 George St.
732.545.5115
www.makedas.com
NO COVER
Saturdays John Bianculli Jazz Trio
7:30-10:30 PM

STATE THEATRE

15 Livingston Ave.
732-246-7469
www.statetheatre.nj.org

Newton

BULA

134 Spring St.
973-579-7338
www.bularestaurant.com
Fridays 8:00 PM

North Arlington

UVA

602 Ridge Road
Friday 7:00 PM
Adam Brenner

North Branch

NEW ORLEANS FAMILY RESTAURANT

1285 State Highway 28
908-725-0011
7:00 PM

Nutley

HERB'S PLACE AT THE PARK PUB
785 Bloomfield Avenue
973-235-0696
8:30-11:30 PM

Oakland

HANSIL'S BAR AND GRILL

7 Ramapo Valley Rd.
201-337-5649

RUGA'S

4 Barbara Lane
201-337-0813
Tuesday thru Saturday 7:00 PM

Pine Brook

MILAN

13 Hook Mountain Road
973-808-3321
www.milanrestaurant.com
Fridays 6:30 PM Stein Brothers

Plainfield

CAFÉ VIVACE
1370 South Avenue
908-753-4500
www.cafevivace.com
Saturdays 7:30 PM

Princeton

MCCARTER THEATRE

91 University Place
609-258-2787

MEDITERRA

29 Hulfish St.
609-252-9680
NO COVER
www.terramomo.com/restaurant/mediterrera

SALT CREEK GRILLE

1 Rockingham Row,
Forrestal Village
609-419-4200
www.saltcreekgrille.com

WITHERSPOON GRILL

57 Witherspoon Street
609-924-6011
www.jmgroupprinceton.com
Tuesday night jazz 6:30 - 9:30 PM

Rahway

ARTS GUILD OF RAHWAY

1670 Irving St.
732-381-7511
www.rahwayartsguild.org
8:00 PM

Randolph

STONEFIRE GRILLEHOUSE & BAR

500 Route 10 West
www.stonefirerestaurant.com
973-537-7070
Sunday Jazz 6 PM

Raritan

MUGS PUB AND RESTAURANT

73 West Somerset Street
908-725-6691
Fridays 7 PM

Red Bank

COUNT BASIE THEATRE

99 Monmouth St.
732-842-9000

"JAZZ IN THE PARK"

Riverside Park
732-530-2782

Ridgewood

WINBERIE'S AMERICAN BISTRO

30 Oak Street
201-444-3700
www.selectrestaurants.com
Thursdays Piano Jazz/Pop
Fridays/Saturdays Jazz/Pop duos

Rumson

SALT CREEK GRILLE
4 Bingham Avenue
732-933-9272
www.saltcreekgrille.com

Sayreville

SHOT IN THE DARK SPORTS BAR & GRILL

404 Washington Road
732-254-9710
Thursday 7:30 PM
John Bianculli

Seabright

THE QUAY
280 Ocean Ave
732-741-7755
Tuesday nights Jazz Lobsters
big band

Sewell

TERRA NOVA
590 Delsea Drive
856-589-8883
http://terranovarestaurantbar.com
Fridays & Saturdays Live Jazz

Short Hills

JOHNNY'S ON THE GREEN
440 Parsonage Hill Road
973-467-8882
www.johnnysonthegreen.com

Somerville

VERVE RESTAURANT

18 East Main St.
908-707-8605
www.vervestyle.com
Occasional Thursdays 6 PM
Fridays/Saturdays 8:30 PM

South Brunswick

JAZZ CAFÉ

South Brunswick (Dayton)
Municipal Complex
540 Ridge Road
732-329-4000 ext. 7635
www.arts@sbtjn.net
first Friday every month
\$5 admission includes light refreshments

South Orange

DANCING GOAT CAFÉ

21 South Orange St
973-275-9000
www.thedancinggoat.com
8 PM

SOUTH ORANGE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

One SOPAC Way
973-235-1114

Summit

SUMMIT UNITARIAN CHURCH

4 Waldron Ave.
Sunday

Teaneck

LOUNGE ZEN

254 DeGraw Ave.
201-692-8585
www.lounge-zen.com
No cover

PUFFIN CULTURAL FORUM

20 East Oakdene Ave.
201-836-8923

Tom's River

OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE FINE ARTS CENTER

College Drive
732-255-0550
www.ocean.edu/campus/fine_arts_center
Some Wednesdays

Totowa

46 LOUNGE

300 Route 46 East
973-890-9699
www.46lounge.com
Wednesday Jazz 7:30 PM

SUSHI LOUNGE

235 Route 46 West
www.sushilounge.com
973-890-0007
Sunday Jazz 6 PM

Trenton

JOE'S MILL HILL SALOON

Market & Broad Streets
609-394-7222
Occasionally

Union

VAN GOGH'S EAR CAFÉ

1017 Stuyvesant Ave.
908-810-1844
www.vangoghsearcafe.com
Sundays 8:00 PM
\$3 cover

Watchung

WATCHUNG ARTS CENTER

18 Stirling Road
908-753-0190
wacenter@optonline.net
www.watchungarts.org
The Great Jazz Series
once per month either Friday or Saturday night

Wayne

WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

300 Pompton Road
973-720-2371
www.wpunj.edu
Sunday 4:00 PM

West Caldwell

T'S TRATTORIA MARTINI BAR

1090 Bloomfield Ave.
973-882-3110
Wednesdays/Thursdays/Fridays music

West Orange

CECIL'S

364 Valley Road
973-736-4800
cecilsjazzclub.com

FRANKLIN TAVERN

97-99 Franklin Ave.
973-325-9899
No cover

Westfield

16 PROSPECT WINE BAR AND BISTRO

16 Prospect St.
908-232-7320
Six nights a week

ACQUAVIVA

115 Elm St.
908-301-0700
www.acquaviva-dellefonti.com
Fridays 7:00 PM

Woodbridge

JJ BITTING BREWING CO.

33 Main Street
732-634-2929
www.njbrewpubs.com
Fridays 9:30 PM

Wood Ridge

MARTINI GRILL

187 Hackensack St.
201-209-3000
Wednesday through Saturday

The Name Dropper

Recommendations may be sent to nd@njjs.org.

BOB DEVOS QUARTET

December 4, Arts Council of Princeton, Paul Robeson Center/ Robert L. Solley Theatre.

At Cecil's, West Orange, **DON BRADEN'S** got a CD release weekend on December 5 and 6.

JAMES L. DEAN GROOVE CATS

December 14. \$15 includes dance lesson, buffet. Whiskey Café Lyndhurst.

BEACON HILL JAZZ BAND

Holiday Concert December 14. Watchung Arts Center, Watchung (908) 753-0190, www.watchungarts.org.

December 18, **JOHN BIANCULLI TRIO** at Mediterra Restaurant & Bar, Princeton

And **WINARD HARPER** appears at Cecil's December 19 and 20.



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Whether you need entertainment for a private party or corporate event, restaurant or jazz club, vocalist **Laura Hull** will provide a memorable musical experience tailored to your needs.

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