



BMF opens new museum-office

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—After 14 years in separate locations, the Berman Music Foundation museum and office have been combined under one roof, raising its visibility and giving the general public greater access to its valuable resources, especially for students, musicians and music scholars. The move furthers the BMF's longtime commitment to advocate and educate through music.

Housed on the Skylight Gallery level of The Burkholder Project at 719 P St. in Lincoln's Historic Haymarket District, the combined BMF museum-office will celebrate a grand opening April 3 from 7-9 p.m., in conjunction with the First Friday Gallery Walk. Live music will be provided by saxophonist Bill Wimmer and keyboardist John Carlini, and a new mural done especially for the BMF by Lincoln artist Leora Platte will be unveiled that evening.

Since he founded the BMF in the spring of 1995, Butch Berman maintained his vast collection of recordings, films and music books in the basement of his home in south-



BMF neon sign illuminates an office window for all to see.

east Lincoln. When asked, he would gladly give a personal "tour" of his music archives, an opportunity he truly enjoyed. But since Butch's death on Jan. 31, 2008, the museum has remained closed to the public.

BMF trustee Tony Rager spent many months seeking a location where the collection could be ad-

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The new BMF offices are on the second floor of The Burkholder Project at 719 P St., in downtown Lincoln.

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equately used by music lovers and scholars, even consulting with educational institutions in other states to find a suitable site. Finally, rather than farm out parts of the collection to different places and abandon the hometown audience that Butch and the BMF had cultivated over the years, Rager began looking for options closer to home.

The BMF office had been located in the Burkholder Project's lower level since its inception. Wanting to continue the mutually beneficial tenant-landlord relationship, Rager and Anne Burkholder agreed that a vacant loft apartment would make a suitable home for the new, improved BMF facilities.

While appreciating the literal "underground" status of its damp, windowless environs, this editor and webmaster had began to yearn for a room with a view. With the latest developments, his prayers also were answered.

From four large windows along the north wall, the bright and roomy new quarters overlook the corner



The front room displays many framed and autographed posters from concerts sponsored by the BMF.

of Seventh and P streets, a quaint crossroads dominated by historic brick buildings, a brick-paved street and old-fashioned lamp posts. Just across the street to the west is Lincoln Station, a former Burlington Northern railroad depot still operating as a stop for Amtrak while housing offices, an antiques mall, and a restaurant. To the north of the BMF is the popular Lazlo's restaurant and brewpub and up the street are The Oven, the city's best Indian restaurant; and The Mill, a popular coffee house and meeting place for downtown workers and shoppers.

Situated in the bustling hub of downtown Lincoln, the Haymarket District is within a few blocks of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, the daily Lincoln Journal Star newspaper, numerous retail shops and offices, and the city, county and state seats of government. That makes it an ideal location for the BMF and its mission to protect and promote unique forms of American music.

The BMF collection consists of thousands of recordings in a vari-

ety of styles and formats, including 45s and LP records, DVDs and VHS videotapes, and a large library of books on the history of jazz, blues, soul, rhythm and blues and rock 'n' roll. It was Butch's wish that the foundation continue to offer access to this vast resource for anyone who was interested, especially a younger audience who may not be aware of America's musical heritage. He had been a rare, precocious collector, amassing more than 300 rock 'n' roll 45s by age 10 and eventually broadening his interests to encompass blues, soul, country, folk and jazz.

During the last year of his life, Butch worked with computer whiz Paul Kelly to create a digital catalog of the collection, archiving the recordings and videos for easy reference. A separate "listening room" will allow visitors to hear the music and view music videos in comfort, with the kind of high-quality sound reproduction that Butch demanded.

The new museum-office also displays many of the framed, autographed posters of jazz artists



A "listening room" allows visitors to hear music and view videos from the BMF collection.



A wall is devoted to personal photos of Butch Berman and his many friends and fellow musicians.

Photos by Tom Ineck



Butch Berman's custom-made oak cabinets contain much of the BMF music archive of LPs and CDs. They recently were moved from Butch's house to the new location in the Historic Haymarket District in downtown Lincoln.

that the BMF has sponsored over the years, along with photos of Butch and his many musician friends. There has been an effort throughout to retain something of the relaxed, informal atmosphere of the former, home-based museum.

The new home has the potential to expand the foundation's educational and philanthropic mission, said Butch's widow, Grace Sankey-Berman.

"I am excited about the museum-office combination because it has the potential of taking Butch's vision to another level. Butch put together an extensive music collection which he enjoyed sharing with people. This office-museum will give the public a chance to continue to enjoy it. Beyond that, it will be a great resource for music education which is the main focus of the BMF going forward."

The BMF offices will be open by appointment, with special emphasis on music scholars and musicians. Call the offices at (402) 261-

5480 to arrange a visit.

The Berman Music Foundation is a Nebraska non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Gifts to the foundation are tax deductible in accordance with IRS rules and regulations governing donations to charities.



A corner table glows in the light of the neon sign.



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Editor and Designer:
Tom Ineck

Contributing writers: Tom Ineck and Grace Sankey-Berman

Photographers: Tom Ineck, Bill Brown and others (Courtesy Photos and File Photos)

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is a non-profit, tax exempt, 501(c)(3) private foundation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Nebraska Department of Revenue. It was established in the spring of 1995 to protect and promote unique forms of jazz music.

Trustee: Tony Rager

Consultants: Grace Sankey-Berman, Russ Dantzler, Kay Davis, Dan Demuth, Tom Ineck, Gerald Spaits, Leslie Spaits and Wade Wright

Concert Review

Project Omaha is both the band and the vibe

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Six musicians with diverse Nebraska ties will reunite for a June 23 performance at Jazz in June on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. The only other time they shared a stage was for a two-night engagement that resulted in a live recording called “Project Omaha,” a moniker that describes the band and the vibe, a gathering of Midwesterners bent on making good music and having a good time.

Saxophonist Bill Wimmer had considered the recording for several years before it came to fruition. Over the last decade or so, he has frequented Vail, Colo., to sit in with keyboardist and singer Tony Gulizia, who moved from Omaha to the Rocky Mountains resort many years ago and has since established a reputation as the area’s most popular entertainer.

The two drew up plans for a dream project that would eventually include six musicians with ties to Nebraska. Gulizia and his brother, percussionist Joey Gulizia are Omaha natives. Guitarist Dave Stryker and drummer Victor Lewis, world-class players based in New York City, have deep Omaha roots, as does bassist Mark Luebbe. Wimmer hails from West Point, Neb., but has called Lincoln his home for many years.

Gulizia and Wimmer could have gathered a group of local Vail musicians for the gig, but they wanted to “raise it to the next level,” Wimmer said. “I really wanted to make a good record. We wanted to focus on it being a good record, and something listenable, not necessar-



Photo by Joanne Klein

Project Omaha is (from left) drummer Victor Lewis, keyboardist Tony Gulizia, saxophonist Bill Wimmer, bassist Mark Luebbe, guitarist Dave Stryker and percussionist Joey Gulizia.



Photo by Stefan Held

Victor Lewis on drums

ily something commercial.” The goal was to fall along the jazz spectrum somewhere between an esoteric jam band and a patronizing lounge act.

A top-notch drummer would be essential to create the drive and rhythmic anchor necessary in a successful jazz recording. A friend of Tony’s since high school, Lewis was the obvious choice. For more than 30 years, he has been the drummer of choice for such jazz luminaries



The CD “Project Omaha” was the long-planned brainchild of Bill Wimmer and Tony Gulizia.

as Woody Shaw, Stan Getz, Bobby Watson, Kenny Barron, J.J. Johnson, Bobby Hutcherson, Carla Bley and many others.

Gulizia also has a long history with Stryker, who has recorded more than 20 CDs under his own name and others with the likes of singer Kevin Mahogany, saxophonist Steve Slagle, and fellow guitarist

Royce Campbell. He also had a long stint touring with the legendary tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine.

Project Omaha became a reality when Gulizia and Wimmer secured the ideal venue for a live recording—the Kelly Liken restaurant in Vail—and booked two dates in 2008, May 13-14. Planning began many months in advance. Everyone cleared their calendars for travel, recording, and “hang time” that would allow the bandmates to establish the camaraderie that is essential to good jazz interplay.

Wimmer, Gulizia and Stryker put together a song list that would both bring out the best in all the players and entertain their live audiences, as well. The fact that all six players hail from Nebraska and have ties to Omaha is somewhat coincidental, but Wimmer acknowledges that the city was a “jazz Mecca” for all of them in their formative years.

“In a way, it’s a going-back-home record. But, in another way, it’s a looking forward record and it’s really looking at the possibilities.” Wimmer stops short of identifying



Bill Wimmer in performance on tenor

the resulting collaboration as a “Nebraska sound.”

“I won’t say that, but I will say this, and Victor would probably agree with me. There is a certain Midwest attitude and there’s an openness, a real down-homeness about being from Nebraska, Kansas, Illinois, Chicago. I do think there’s a certain Midwest esthetic that connects people a little bit.”

Perhaps that comes across most obviously in Tony Gulizia’s vocal performances of the romantic ballads “I Thought About You” and “She Was Too Good to Me” and in the soulful tunes

“Rhyne, Rhythm and Song” and “Cherry Red.” Latin selections such as Dexter Gordon’s “Soy Califa,” “Gypsy Blue,” Stryker’s “Carnaval” and the Brazilian medley “Dreamer/Felicidade” also display that easy, “open” quality that Wimmer cites and give the percussionists ample space to mix it up.

It all comes together on Tony Williams’ seldom-covered “Geo Rose.” A hallmark of that drummer’s breezy, hard-charging style, it is well-served by the Midwestern attitude, as exemplified by

Stryker’s soaring guitar, Wimmer’s snaking soprano sax, Tony Gulizia’s steel-drum sound on electronic keys and, of course, by the formidable percussion duo of Victor Lewis and Joey Gulizia. Finally, Luebbe’s bass provides the anchoring riff that creates the tune’s powerful mood.

The recording venue is intimate, seating about 75 diners. That also contributes to the high-quality acoustics and the sense of excitement that pervade the CD. Over the course of the two-night stand, the musicians had only two opportunities to get each tune down.

“It was kind of like the old days, where you went in and you only had maybe eight hours, and you’d make two takes and you’d have to move on,” Wimmer said. “There are a lot of great musicians making music now that isn’t connected directly.”

By contrast, the great innovators of the bop tradition were constrained economically and by the limitations of the recording medium, so they were forced to make concise musical statements on the fly. Wimmer wanted to inject that unpredictable element into the music with spur-of-the-moment solos that allowed for individual freedom of expression.

“The biggest compliment that I have on any of it is that the musicians had a good time, and the music was happenin’,” he said. “You can’t fake that.”

In addition to the June 23 appearance at Jazz in June in Lincoln, Project Omaha will perform a club date June 21 at Julio’s in West Omaha and a festival June 19 in Hastings, Neb., during the band’s weeklong “reunion” this summer. To listen to tunes from the Project Object CD, go to <http://www.myspace.com/billwimmer>. The CD is available for purchase at <http://cdbaby.com/cd/billwimmer>.



Dave Stryker on guitar

Courtesy Photo

Concert Preview

Nebraska roots evident in 2009 Jazz in June

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—The Berman Music Foundation again will play a major role in sponsoring the Jazz in June series, a popular event that annually draws thousands to weekly concerts in the sculpture garden outside Sheldon Museum of Art in downtown Lincoln.

For the 2009 edition of Jazz in June, the lineup has a decidedly local resonance, with three of the five Tuesday evening performances featuring artists with strong ties to Nebraska.

The Nebraska Jazz Orchestra returns to the stage June 2, along with guest vocalist and pianist Christine Hitt, a native of Bellevue, Neb., who studied music at the University of Minnesota and the University of Arizona. She has earned accolades for her strong scat-singing skills and lilting Latin rhythms.

"Her wholesome, energetic singing is characterized by range and refinement and her immense pianistic prowess is carefully tailored to capture the sense and spirit of each selection," wrote one critic.

Hitt's 1999 debut release on the MaxJazz label is entitled "You'd Be Nice to Come Home To." In addition to the familiar title track, the recording showcases such standards as "Dream a Little Dream of Me," "Thou Swell," "A Time For Love," "Moonglow," "I've Got a Crush on You," "Joy Spring," "My Foolish Heart," "What is This Thing Called Love" and "In a Mellotone."

ZARO, a jazz quartet based in Fort Collins, Colo., will perform their unique blend of progressive R&B, jazz and funk on June 9. Each of the four letters in the band's name



Christine Hitt

represents the first letter of a player's first name. They are Zac Rothenbuehler, guitar and vocals; Andrew Vogt, saxophones and woodwinds; Roger Barnhart, basses; and Oscar Dezoto, drums and percussion.

The band plays an eclectic mix

of tunes, including the familiar TV theme song of "Sanford and Son," the movie theme song "Mo' Betta Blues," Stevie Wonder's "Sir Duke," and Nat Adderley's "Jive Samba." Their influences range from Marvin Gaye and Maceo Parker to Frank Zappa and Charles Mingus.

Though he has lived in the Rocky Mountain State since 2000, Vogt is a Lincoln native with many ties to the local music scene and a lot of loyal friends. He was interviewed for a BMF article in July 2007, and his CD "Action Plan" was reviewed by Butch Berman that same year. Vogt also figured prominently in a Tomfoolery column last year about Jay's Bistro and Jazz Lounge in Fort Collins, where he frequently performs.

Singer Kendra Shank will return with her long-time quartet to the Jazz in June stage June 16. Shank's latest CD is entitled "Mosaic." Released in late March, it is largely comprised of standards and features her favorite bandmates—pia-



ZARO is (from left) bassist Roger Barnhart, saxophonist Andrew Vogt, drummer Oscar Dezoto and guitarist and singer Zac Rothenbuehler.

Courtesy Photo

Courtesy Photo



Kendra Shank and her band at the Jazz Standard in New York City

Photo by Gene Martin
Project Omaha will perform a club date June 21 at Julio's in West Omaha and a festival June 19 in Hastings, Neb. Bill Wimmer was interviewed by the BMF for a feature on the band and the live recording.

For the final concert of the series, drummer John Riley will front a trio on June 30. Riley has visited Lincoln a couple of times before, most recently as drummer for the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra when the big band appeared at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in February 2008. In a professional career spanning more than 30 years, he has performed and recorded with Woody Herman, Miles Davis, saxophonist Bob Mintzer, pianist Kenny Werner, trumpeter Randy Sandke, guitarist John Scofield, and many others.

Riley is on the faculty of Manhattan School of Music, and SUNY Purchase, and is an artist in residence at Amsterdam Conservatory in Holland. He also authored of "The Art of Bop Drumming," "Beyond Bop Drumming," and "The Jazz Drummer's Workshop."

Jazz in June concerts begin at 7 p.m. each Tuesday and run until 9 p.m., with two sets and an intermission. The concerts are free, but listeners are asked for contributions to support the annual series.



Project Omaha will reunite for Jazz in June.

Photo by Joanne Klein

viewed for a BMF feature article in April 2007.

Project Omaha, who will perform June 23, is a sextet of musicians with strong ties to Nebraska. Saxophonist Bill Wimmer and keyboardist-singer Tony

nist Frank Kimbrough, bassist Dean Johnson and drummer Tony Moreno, reed player Billy Drewes and guitarist Ben Monder. The BMF will post a review of Shank's CD on its website before her June visit to Lincoln.

Shank also is a longtime friend of the Berman Music Foundation, which first brought her to Lincoln as part of an all-star lineup that also included Claude "Fiddler" Williams, pianist Jaki Byard, bassist Earl May and drummer Jackie Williams. She performed at Jazz in June in 2004 and 2007, when she featured a set of tunes from her acclaimed tribute CD, "A Spirit Free: Abbey Lincoln Songbook." Shank also was inter-

Gulizia assembled the outfit for a live recording last year in Colorado. Gulizia and his brother, percussionist Joey Gulizia are Omaha natives. Guitarist Dave Stryker and drummer Victor Lewis, world-class players based in New York City, have deep Omaha roots, as does bassist Mark Luebbe. Wimmer hails from West Point, Neb., but has called Lincoln his home for many years.

The six will reunite for several June performances. In addition to the Jazz in June concert,



Courtesy Photo

Drummer John Riley will front a trio at Jazz in June.

Memorial

Memorial Ping Pong tournament keeps tradition alive

By Grace Sankey-Berman

For some 30 years, Butch played Ping Pong with his friends. Brad Krieger and Daniel Nelson have been a part of the core group of men that played with Butch for all those years. Butch loved the game and looked forward to every Saturday when he could play with his friends in his basement, where he had home-court advantage.

So, when Butch died I wondered what to do with the Ping Pong table. I thought it would be fitting for either Daniel or Brad to have it. Neither of them had room, but they came up with a better plan—to find a place for the table where they could continue to play and keep the tradition going.

Bill Brown, who also played Ping Pong with the group, offered his garage. Bill is a collector of all things Porsche, so it is the perfect guy hang-out. The garage contains classic Porsches, full-size and miniatures, spare parts, pictures of different model Porsches, and a whole lot more. Bill even makes steering wheels.

“It is a guys’ Mecca,” said Daniel Nelson.

Daniel, Brad and Bill moved the table to Bill’s garage. They wanted a label for the table and finally settle on the “Butch Berman Still Boppin’ Memorial Table.” It looks great on the side of the table, and I am sure that Butch would approve.

They had a tournament in Butch’s memory on March 21. I was late getting to the tournament, but pleased to see that more people had showed up than expected. The atmosphere was relaxed and there were two guys competitively playing a Ping Pong game. As

I stopped to watch and looked around the garage, there were people talking, reminiscing about the past, or just eating Bill’s great homemade chips and guacamole and the other refreshments. Before the competition began, there



Friends gather at Bill Brown’s garage for Butch Berman Memorial Ping Pong Tournament.



The table is officially labeled.

was a ceremony in memory of Butch. People shared their favorite stories about Butch, and a toast was made to his memory.

Brad and Daniel, like most of the guys in attendance, said they knew Butch from watching him play with the Megatonnes and other bands at the Zoo Bar and eventually met him at Larry’s Showcase while playing Ping Pong. “It all started at the now-closed Larry’s Showcase bar,” said Brad Krieger.

They met on Tuesday nights to have a beer and play Ping Pong. They would also play with other guys that came from Milford and the University of Nebraska. After the bar closed, the core group would stay and play until 2 p.m., so they had a lot of practice and got really good at the game. Other people that came to play at the bar were not so good, except for a few that were unbeatable. The entry fee was \$3 and the more you played and won, the cheaper the beer got. The bartender kept the score. So if you were good, you might break even at the end of the night.

Butch started inviting the guys to play at his house. They got together most Saturdays.

“It was a multi-media experience. You had great music, wine and talk,” Brad said. Butch always had new music he wanted them to hear or a new video he wanted them to watch, slowly building up anticipation and excitement for the game.

They were all very competitive, and Butch was especially so. He always had creative tricks to distract his competitors, Daniel said. “For example, if I was enjoying the music and had momentum in the game, Butch would change it and play something crappy.”

“My ex-wife’s name is Karen Allyson, no relation to the jazz singer, so if Butch wanted to mess with my mind during a game, he would get out all his Karrin Allyson albums and line them up where I could see them,” Brad recalled. They said Butch hated it if anyone missed the scheduled Saturday Ping Pong games and would always give them a hard time, regardless of the reason.

Courtesy Photo

Butch and his friends bragged that Ping Pong was the only game where they could beat jocks. It was a real surprise to the athletic guys who got beat. "Very satisfying," said Brad. While talking to the guys, I could see how much they enjoy the game. Brad explained that "it is an endurance game that takes hours, and not too many people can stand that long. You need good reflexes and mental alertness because you have to find the weak side of the other guy and know where to hit the ball. It is momentum and groove." He said that if you had all these factors you won all the time.

These guys spent many years per-



Grace Sankey-Berman (right) plays Ping Pong.

fecting their game and individual styles. Above all, they created a bond and cultivated a lifetime of comradeship and friendship, which I am grateful to have witnessed and been a part of. I am glad that the Ping Pong table has a home

Photo by Bill Brown

with friends.

Ruthann Nahorny, Butch's friend and assistant, and her boyfriend, Bob, came to the tournament a couple hours after her beloved mother's funeral. I was not expecting her to show up, considering the circumstances, but was pleasantly surprised to see her. I also appreciated Bob Doris, Kirk, Dale, Terry, Jimmy and all the other people that took the time to attend.

I want to especially thank Daniel, Brad and Bill for putting this tournament together and remembering Butch in such a meaningful way. It was an enjoyable gathering of friends.

Tomfoolery

Kansas City trip has the essential ingredients

By Tom Ineck

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—From his teenage years at Wentworth Military Academy, Butch Berman had a fondness for all things related to this city, which was just a few miles up the road from the school.

He often talked of listening to WHB Radio, at 10,000 watts one of the most powerful Top 40 stations in the country during the 1960s. He would frequently escape the discipline of military life with wild forays into KC for drinking and other illegal activities. Most of all, he would immerse himself in the legendary music of Kansas City—blues, soul and jazz.

Butch instilled that love of Kansas City in all of us here at the Berman Music Foundation, and we pledge to maintain our ties to that vibrant city with occasional 200-mile trips south and faithful reports of our adventures there. This is the first of those accounts. Needless to say, it will not have the same irreverent tone that Butch's brought to his personal columns, but we hope to provide our readers with

information they can use on their next trip to KC.

Our immediate destination was a March 20 concert by singer Madeleine Peyroux at the Folly Theater. The review of that concert is featured elsewhere in this issue.

We spent two nights at the Hotel Phillips, one of Butch's favorite hotels and just a couple of blocks from the Folly. Situated between Broadway and Main streets on 12th Street, it is a convenient home base to points in the downtown and mid-town areas, including the waterfront, the Power & Light District, Crown Center, Westport, and the Country Club Plaza.

On this visit, we checked out the refurbished Union Station, at 30 West Pershing Road, which sadly sat empty and unused for many years. While still lacking a lot of activities that might make it a popular destination, it is a spectacularly preserved building from the golden age of rail travel. The Beaux-Arts station opened in 1914.

After some midday walking and

shopping in the Plaza, we headed back to the hotel to rest up for that evening, which would see us at Jardine's Restaurant & Jazz Club for dinner and a performance by blues and soul singer extraordinaire Ida McBeth, a Kansas City legend for some 30 years. Jardine's, a small club at 4536 Main St. overlooking the Plaza, is itself a KC legend, having hosted many great jazz performances and late-night jam sessions.

Ida and her band did not disappoint. On the contrary, she displayed youthful energy, enthusiasm and audience rapport in a stylistically mixed set that included the ballads "My Funny Valentine" and "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered," a swinging "There Will Never be Another You," the samba "Dream" and the blues classic "You Can Have My Husband (But Don't You Mess With My Man)."

This brief trip to Kansas City had all the essential ingredients—a lot of music, good dining, a little shopping, and spring-like weather.

*Friends of BMF***BMF continues collaboration with School of Music**

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—The Berman Music Foundation and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have enjoyed a long tradition of collaboration and exploration in the related areas of jazz performance and jazz education.

In October 1996, the BMF brought singer Kevin Mahogany to town to perform and conduct a workshop with the Kenny Barron Trio at Westbrook Recital Hall on the UNL campus. The following February, saxophonist Joe Lovano and bassist Christian McBride performed at UNL's Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Saxophonist Benny Waters and pianist Jane Jarvis conducted a UNL workshop in March 1997, as did saxophonist Greg Abate in April. The Motion Poets performed at Westbrook Recital Hall in October of that year, and the Mingus Big Band took the Lied Center stage that November, all with support from the BMF.

BMF sponsorship has continued through the years with performances and/or workshops featuring saxophonist Ahmad Alaadeen (December 1998), Bobby Watson and Horizon (October 1999), Norman Hedman's Tropicque and Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band (March 2001), and singer Sheila Jordan and bassist Cameron Brown.

In addition, the BMF has for many years been a major sponsor of the Jazz in June concert series, staged in the sculpture garden of the Sheldon Museum of Art on the UNL campus.

That tradition continues with several new projects-in-progress involving the UNL School of Music. Prof. John Richmond, director of the music school, has been instrumental in working with the BMF on these exciting ventures.

"The UNL School of Music is



Vibraphonist Stefan Harris performs students during the High School Honor Jazz Weekend in February.

Photo by Tom Ineck

honored to forge these new partnerships with the Berman Music Foundation, a name synonymous with commitment to jazz performance and education," Richmond said. "Our school is moving forward with several strategically important initiatives in jazz education, including newly approved master's and doctoral degree programs in jazz studies (pending approval from the National Association of Schools of Music), a new high school jazz camp in the summer, and a Berman Fellowship Program in conjunction with our High School Honor Jazz Weekend to provide an in-service educational opportunity for high school music teachers to expand their understanding of principles in jazz education."

Berman fellowships were awarded earlier this year to several area high school music teachers. They were in residence at UNL during the High School Honor Jazz Weekend in February, allowing them to work with artist-

in-residence Stefon Harris, the UNL jazz faculty, UNL jazz students and the many high school students attending the weekend activities.

"An especially exciting facet of our recent partnerships is the launch of our new Berman Fellowship Program in conjunction with the annual High School Honor Jazz Week-

end," Richmond said. "While we have had the chance to engage an outstanding cadre of gifted high school jazz musicians, this new program permits us to reach out to high school music teachers in an effort to enable them to deliver jazz education in their schools to a higher standard."

Looking ahead, the BMF will partner with the School of Music for its first UNL High School Jazz Camp, June 28 through July 2 on the UNL campus. Artist-in-residence John Riley, drummer with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra and professor of jazz percussion at Manhattan School of Music, has worked with UNL students during two previous visits in 2007 and 2008. Riley and his trio also will perform June 30 in the final Jazz in June concert.

"High school jazz students from across the region will convene on the UNL campus for an outstanding experience studying jazz performance, improvisation, composition, and jazz history," Richmond explained. "It is the quintessential win-win-win partnership among these distinguished collaborators. We couldn't be more proud to be a part of it all."



John Richmond

Concert Review

Blue Note 7 performance a landmark event

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Either because of prohibitive expense or artistic differences, all-star jazz groups seldom record and tour together while still in their prime. Such projects are more frequent among elder statesmen of the music, as though they can be marketed like museum pieces long after their instrumental skills are diminished.

That makes The Blue Note 7 phenomenon a landmark event. This septet of living jazz giants has been crisscrossing the country for months behind their January release, “Mosaic: A Celebration of Blue Note Records,” recognizing 70 years of legendary recording history. The CD is reviewed in this issue of the BMF newsletter.

By the time its ambitious touring itinerary comes to an end with a six-night stand in April at Birdland in New York City, the all-star aggregation will have performed in more than 50 venues, including Omaha and Lincoln.

Anticipation was in the air March 26, as the band took the stage at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln. Dramatic lighting set the mood for the casual entrance of trumpeter Nicholas Payton, tenor saxophonist Ravi Coltrane, alto saxophonist and flutist Steve Wilson, guitarist Peter Bernstein, pianist Bill Charlap, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Lewis Nash.

A true cooperative, the seven displayed an egalitarian spirit in everything, sharing the introducing of tunes and solo “spotlight time.” And, nearly all of them took a hand in the arrangements.

The opener, Freddie Hubbard’s “Hub-Tones,” may have seemed an odd choice, since it does not appear on the CD, but it was a fitting tribute to one of the late legends of the Blue Note label and served notice that the band has



The Blue Note 7

gone beyond the confines of the eight tracks included on the recording. The tune’s intricate rhythm pattern was no obstacle for soloists Payton, Wilson, Coltrane and Nash, who never ceased to amaze listeners with his complete mastery of the drum kit.

“Party Time” by Lee Morgan received a bluesy treatment in Bernstein’s arrangement and everyone took a solo. Washington and Nash collaborated on a tantalizing interlude that had the drummer displaying his scat-singing skills. McCoy Tyner’s lovely ballad, “Search for Peace,” was the first tune from the CD. As arranged by Charlap’s wife, pianist Renee Rosnes, the stately melody was stated by the brass in beautiful harmony, followed by solos from Wilson on alto and Payton on trumpet.

The intensity returned on “Criss Cross,” a typically angular Thelonious Monk composition arranged by Wilson. The virtuosic Charlap added his own keyboard variations, then Wilson on alto and Coltrane on tenor explored the tune’s inherent harmonic obstacle course. Bernstein and Washington added brief solos, the horns punctuated the tune in unison and Nash held the whole affair together, maneuvering easily through the quirky rhythmic changes. It was a masterpiece of jazz interpretation and individual expression.

A pulsing Latin beat and stop-time passages gave Charlap’s arrangement of Horace Silver’s “The Outlaw” a driving, forward motion that was aided and abetted by Nash’s flawless timekeeping. Wilson turned in a brawny alto solo, and Payton effortlessly flew through the changes with daring octave leaps. Charlap himself created nifty keyboard segues between the solos.

In his arrangement of Duke Pearson’s “Idle Moments,” once a bluesy, ballad showcase for the late, great guitarist Grant Green, Bernstein spent considerable time in the spotlight, slowly building on the hesitation rhythm with soulful horn accompaniment and a snaking string solo.

The CD’s title track, Cedar Walton’s “Mosaic,” also served as the two-hour concert’s grand finale, a ram-bunctious tribute to drummer Art Blakey, whose legendary Jazz Messengers first established the tune’s reputation when Walton was the band’s pianist. Appropriately, Nash arranged the number, recreating the fury and power of Blakey’s playing while giving everyone a chance to take a lively solo. Nash’s own extended solo was a thorough drum lesson, ranging from sticks to brushes to mallets in a dazzling display of the percussive art.

A standing ovation brought the septet back to the stage for a brief rendition of Dexter Gordon’s “Soy Califa,” highlighted by a stunning Charlap solo.

The Blue Note 7 CD and tour have been so successful that there is talk of a follow-up recording and future performances. Fans of straight-ahead jazz at its finest have reason to celebrate.

Courtesy Photo

Concert Review

Peyroux features original songs with style

By Tom Ineck

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—In little more than a decade, and with just four releases to her name, Madeleine Peyroux has established a reputation as one of the most original vocal stylists on the scene. Often compared with Billie Holiday, she possesses a world-weary vocal quality and an ability to slide easily across the harmonic spectrum while remaining true to the melodic line. Her choice of material—from country blues to modern folk to French chanson to traditional swing—has also made her a crossover favorite.

All of those qualities were in ample evidence during an appearance March 20 at the Folly Theater in Kansas City, Mo. She and her quartet of top-notch sidemen delivered a captivating, 90-minute set that never lagged. It was a masterful, well-disciplined performance that, nevertheless, seemed intimately informal.

Understandably, the emphasis was on her new CD, “Bare Bones,” released just 10 days before her KC visit. It represents a major step forward, as it is her first release of all-original material. On most of the 11 tunes, she shares credits with other songsmiths, including producer Larry Klein, Julian Coryell and Steely Dan’s Walter Becker. As always, it is Peyroux’s idiosyncratic style that makes the songs completely hers.

For the Folly show, her versatile bandmates included the great Larry Goldings, switching off on acoustic piano, electronic keys and Hammond B-3 organ; Jon Herrington on acoustic and electric guitars and mandolin; Barak Mori on acoustic and electric basses; and Darren Beckett on drums and assorted percussion. Peyroux also contributed some nice acoustic guitar work. The instrumental diversity kept things

fresh all evening.

Before introducing the new songs, Peyroux began with her definitive version of Leonard Cohen’s “Dance Me to the End of Love,” with Goldings taking a swinging piano solo and Herrington chiming in on guitar. The new CD’s title track had Goldings on sultry organ accompaniment, as Peyroux referred to her Southern heritage—“They preached the gospel

down in Metairie, they preached it in school. It never made much sense to me, wonder if it was supposed to.”

On “Don’t Wait Too Long,” from the 2004 release “Careless Love,” the singer displayed her astounding technique of sliding up and down the scale as she caressed the lyric, creating a beguiling eroticism. The ballad “River of Tears” featured some wonderful slide guitar work and a subtle organ solo.

Dylan’s “You’re Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go” also received a unique Peyroux treatment, with Beckett utilizing soft mallets in rubato and Goldings on piano. “Damn the Circumstances” is a heart-rending original about dashed dreams and skeletons in the family closet. Peyroux attempted to lighten the mood with “I’m All Right,” introducing the tune as a “happy breakup song.” “A Little Bit” followed in a rollicking, rocking style. The last two are both from “Half the Perfect World,” Peyroux’s 2006 release.

For a brief, two-tune set, the band “unplugged” to recreate Peyroux’s stint



Courtesy Photo

Madeleine Peyroux

as a Paris busker. With Herrington on mandolin, Goldings on melodica, Mori on acoustic bass and Beckett using brushes on a pasteboard box, they played “La Javanaise” and “Don’t Cry Baby,” a Count Basie classic.

In rapid succession, Peyroux and company ran down six more songs from the new release—the moody “Love and

Treachery,” the bluesy “You Can’t Do Me,” the haunting “The Lady of Pigalle,” the wonderful song of love and loss, “I Must Be Saved,” the easy-swinging, feel-good tune, “Instead,” and, as an encore, Peyroux’s tribute to Barack Obama called “Somethin’ Grand.”

The lavish rococo décor of the former burlesque house was an ideal setting for Peyroux’s throwback appeal. But as a songwriter, she demonstrated a timeless talent and a sure sense of poetry in every lyric.

Canadian singer-songwriter Steve Poltz opened with a 30-minute set of quirky originals, including “Brief History of My Life,” which referred comically to his Catholic upbringing, “Everything About You,” from the “Notting Hill” soundtrack, and a whacky, dramatic parody of “Edward Scissorhands” called “Sewing Machine,” featuring a recording of friend A. J. Croce on piano accompaniment. He also displayed some fine finger-picking technique on “Silver Lining” and the instrumental “Chinese Checkers.”

Concert Review

Dana Hall steers NJO through challenging set

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—A degree in aerospace engineering was only the beginning for Dana Hall, who went on to garner diplomas in music, music composition and music arranging and is completing his doctorate in ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago.

"It's Not Rocket Science..." was the ideal title for Hall's March 24 guest appearance with the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra at the Cornhusker Marriott. The versatile percussionist steered the big band through a set of challenging and frequently high-flying performances for the NJO's final concert of the year.

The legendary Woody Herman flag-waver "Four Brothers" kicked things off with a front-line saxophone barrage led by Matt Wallace on tenor sax and Scott Vicroy on baritone. Hall first demonstrated his drum skills on "Synergy," a tune by guest music director Eric Richards, sitting in for Ed Love, who is traveling in Italy with a group of young musicians.

A highlight of the evening was the Thad Jones composition "Us," a funky number featuring intricate, bluesy lines and bright brass ensemble work. Maria Schneider's "Wrygly" had Wallace wailing with soulful intensity on tenor and Peter Bouffard soaring on an inspired rock-style guitar solo.

The band returned to Earth for an exquisite reading of John Coltrane's stately ballad "Central Park West" and a flawless version of Don Grolnick's devilishly difficult "Nothing Personal," with masterful playing by Wallace on tenor, Bob Krueger on flugelhorn and Hall on drums.

"Fingers," a Thad Jones tune based on the changes of "I Got Rhythm," was driven by Hall's fast shuffle beat, which drew excellent so-



Photos by Tom Ineck

Matt Wallace on tenor (above) solos with accompaniment by guitarist Peter Bouffard and bassist Andy Hall as drummer Dana Hall (below) keeps time.



los from several players. Mark Benson delivered a rousing soprano sax statement, while other notable solos came from Bouffard on guitar, Krueger on trumpet, Tom Harvill on piano and Andy Hall on bass.

The audience of 355 also showed enthusiastic support for the opening set by the Omaha Westside High School

Concert Jazz Band, joined by Hall on an Eric Richards arrangement of "Black Orpheus." Directed by Roger Groth, the youthful ensemble also turned in a fine rendition of the Sammy Nestico-penned Basie standard "Wind Machine." Several of the young players showed promise, but the real standout was drummer Grant McMullen, who exhibited ample technique and self-assurance, even when sharing the stage with Hall manning a second drum kit during "Orpheus."

During the intermission, longtime NJO sponsor John Tavlin of Midwest Diamond gave a rambling, impromptu "state of the NJO" address, pleading for support for the financially strapped band, which was founded in 1975. A trumpeter and former band member, Tavlin shared his intimate knowledge of NJO history as he made a persuasive case for the survival of this musical treasure.

Concert Review

Woodwind virtuoso leaves listeners awestruck

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Woodwind virtuoso Mike Tomaro put two generations of local jazz artists through the paces as featured guest artist for the 2009 “Learning from the Master” concert Jan. 22 at the Cornhusker Marriott.

Once a year, the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra brings in an established musician to front the professional band and to mentor the area’s latest crop of musical youth, also known as the Young Lions All-Star Band. Tomaro, who teaches at Duquesne University, left both ensembles awestruck at his considerable instrumental prowess.

After a short set with the younger ensemble, the NJO primed the pump with a rousing rendition of “Writer’s Block,” a bluesy tune featuring trumpeter Bob Krueger, tenor saxophonist Paul Haar and some nice unison playing by the brass section.

Tomaro then joined the NJO for “You and the Night and the Music.” His up-tempo take and astounding tenor playing served notice that he is a force to be reckoned with. His extended solo drew from a deep well of ideas.

Switching to alto sax for Billy Strayhorn’s lush and lovely “A Flower is a Lovesome Thing,” Tomaro set the mood by reading the lyrics before playing the romantic ballad. His arrangement of “Bluesette” transformed the tune into a samba, with Tomaro on soprano sax and trombonist Todd Thatcher and Haar on tenor taking solos.

In another unexpected interpretation, the NJO played Tomaro’s version of J.J. Johnson’s “Lament.” Usually performed as a ballad, it



Photos by Tom Ineck



Guest soloist Mike Tomaro leads the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra with authority on tenor sax (top and bottom right) and on soprano sax (bottom left).

emerged as a mid-tempo waltz that also proved a perfect vehicle for the arranger’s octave leaps and high-register foray on the tenor sax.

From the extensive pop songbook of Stevie Wonder came “Send One Your Love,” first recorded on Wonder’s largely instrumental LP of 1979 entitled “Journey Through the Secret Life of Plants.” This lesser-known tune featured Tomaro on flute and the sax section in a unison interlude.

For his own “Del Corazon,” Tomaro turned to the Electronic Wind Instrument (EWI) in a stylistic nod to the music of guitarist Pat Metheny and pianist Lyle Mays. The breezy

fusion tune had pianist Tom Harvill, drummer Greg Ahl and bassist George Bryan bravely keeping the driving beat.

The band closed with the flag-waver, “Dodo’s Dance,” a tune by pianist Dodo Marmarosa based on the standard “Cherokee.” Tomaro took it at a blazing tempo and improvised with ease over the whole range of the tenor sax, giving the rest of the outfit a chance to burn and inspiring a standing ovation from the crowd of 250.

Jazz on Disc

Blue Note tribute also an artistic achievement

By Tom Ineck



THE BLUE NOTE 7
Mosaic: A Celebration of Blue
Note Records
 Blue Note Records

It is rare when a clever marketing ploy to sell CDs and concert tickets also results in a high-quality product capable of standing alone as a work of great creativity and artistic integrity. So it is with “Mosaic,” a brilliant project conceived to celebrate Blue Note’s 70th anniversary as a great jazz label.

Released in January, the recording brings together a septet of today’s leading proponents of post-bop jazz—Nicholas Payton on trumpet, Steve Wilson on alto sax and flute, Ravi Coltrane on tenor sax, Peter Bernstein on guitar, Bill Charlap on piano, Peter Washington on bass and Lewis Nash on drums. Nash, the eldest, was born in 1958, about the time that many of the classic Blue Note recordings were being waxed. That makes this a poignant tribute to an earlier, and very influential, generation of jazz masters.

Wisely, the eight tunes chosen to represent the Blue Note legacy are given new arrangements that update the sound while remaining true to the originals. Truly a collective, the ensemble shared in arranging the charts.

Nash’s masterful drumming imbues the opening fanfare of Cedar Walton’s “Mosaic” with an urgency and

excitement that continues throughout the piece, a favorite of Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers. In his arrangement, Nash makes no attempt to mimic the great Buhaina, but he admirably retains the Blakey spirit. Likewise, Payton’s take on Joe Henderson’s “Inner Urge” is refreshingly new, but still urgent.

“Search for Peace” gets a lovely arrangement by Renee Rosnes that emphasizes the McCoy Tyner ballad’s exquisite chord changes and spotlights Coltrane’s lush tenor and Payton’s searching trumpet. Wilson’s flute carries the lilting melody line in his treatment of Bobby Hutcherson’s “Little B’s Poem,” with notable solo contributions from Bernstein and Charlap.

Wilson also gives new life to the edgy Thelonious Monk tune “Criss Cross.” No Monk sound-alike—as if that were possible—Charlap develops the quirky theme in his own virtuosic manner and the others offer their own distinctive variations on that theme. Arranger Rosnes returns for “Dolphin Dance,” creating a sophisticated, yet swinging rendition of the Herbie Hancock masterpiece.

“Idle Moments,” written by Duke Pearson and first recorded by guitarist Grant Green in 1963, gets an aptly bluesy arrangement from Bernstein. While prominently featured, the guitarist also involves the horns in some mournful harmonies. Charlap’s arrangement of Horace Silver’s “Outlaw” brings the session to a close with some tricky stop-time passages creating a typically hard-bop attitude.

The Blue Note 7 are bringing their bop celebration to venues nationwide, including a February stop in Omaha and a March 26 appearance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln.



THE HOT CLUB OF SAN FRANCISCO
Bohemian Maestro: Django
Reinhardt & the Impressionists
 Azica Records

Always looking for ways to expand the narrow confines of the “gypsy jazz” style inevitably tied to its virtuosic innovators, guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stephane Grappelli, The Hot Club of San Francisco has embraced not only the standards of the gypsy jazz repertoire, but more conventional modern jazz favorites, as well as pop tunes by Lennon and McCartney and even a couple of classical composers.

But the Bay area band has surpassed itself in the adventurous spirit of its latest release. “Bohemian Maestro: Django Reinhardt and the Impressionists” is an ambitious, and largely successful, attempt to link the legendary gypsy to the music of classical Impressionism, with the quintet occasionally augmented by a woodwind quartet, a piano and even a banjo. For purists of the gypsy jazz persuasion, the result is as mixed as the stylistic disconnect.

“Bohemian Maestro” does not

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lack direct references to Reinhardt—six of the 16 tracks are his compositions—but they tend to be among his more obscure pieces, such as “Diminishing Blackness,” the stirring “Bolero” and the generically titled “Improvisation No. 3.” The Aeros Quintet lends its classical woodwinds to new interpretations of Reinhardt’s “Nymphs” and “Messe/Improvisation,” the latter expanded from a surviving fragment intended by Reinhardt as a mass dedicated to the Romany people.

Hot Club guitarist and leader, Paul Mehling, contributes to the growing gypsy jazz songbook with two new tunes, and violinist Evan Price adds one. With bassist Clint Baker and rhythm guitarists Jason Vanderford and Jeff Magidson, the core quintet is as lively as ever. Pianist Jeffrey Kahane infuses three numbers with his keyboard pyrotechnics. Mehling switches to banjo for one of the most refreshing tracks on the record, Jelly Roll Morton’s “The Pearls.”

Mehling’s “Le Surdoué” imaginatively recombines fragments of Reinhardt compositions and improvisations. His “Waltz for M.C. Escher” cleverly mimics the artist’s optical illusions with a musical equivalent.

The estimable Impressionists whose melodies tie the whole affair together are Claude Debussy, Francis Poulenc and Heitor Villa-Lobos, whose gently swinging “Choros” is a great vehicle for the Hot Club. Debussy’s immortal “Clair de Lune” closes this challenging and ground-breaking project, a somewhat more subdued set of performances than we are used to from these swinging gentlemen, but equally satisfying.



BILL HENDERSON
Beautiful Memorial: Live at the Vic
 Ahuh Records

At age 78, the wonderful jazz singer Bill Henderson finally has a new recording that puts him in historical perspective and provides a stunning setting for his still-amazing vocal gifts. The venue is The Vic, a club in Santa Monica, Calif., near his longtime home in Los Angeles.

Incredibly, Henderson’s last release was a 1981 tribute to the music of Johnny Mercer. Since then, he has been featured occasionally on others’ recordings, most notably Charlie Haden’s 1999 release “Art of the Song.” With “Beautiful Memory,” Henderson steps fully into the warm glow of the spotlight.

The audience at Vic’s has an obvious affection for their local treasure, and Henderson’s trio—Tateng Katindig on keyboards, Chris Conner on bass and the great Roy McCurdy on drums—shows an ease and compatibility with the front man. On the opener, “All the Things You Are,” you believe him when he joyfully repeats “happy, happy days are mine.” He is just as persuasive while singing the blues, as his rendition of “Never Make Your Move Too Soon” soulfully illustrates.

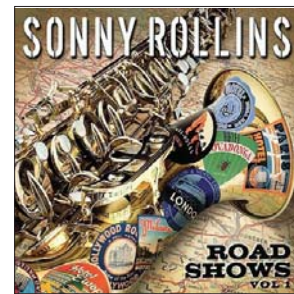
This 12-track set comprised largely of familiar standards never lags and offers new perspectives on such old chestnuts as “You Are My Sunshine,” “Royal Garden Blues” and “That Old Black Magic.” Henderson shouts a bluesy “Sunshine” with a broad and breezy style in the upper register,

inspiring the audience to a soul clap. He playfully swings the lyrics on “Garden,” and recites the ballad “Black Magic” with very effective hesitation phrasing before escalating the tempo to a swinging groove.

Harold Arlen’s wonderful “Sleepin’ Bee” gets the tender ballad treatment it deserves, with Henderson drawing out the lyrics in long, languorous phrases. Henderson dives into the Latin mainstream with the rarely heard “The Moon Is Yellow.” He brings new meaning to Elton John’s modern standard “Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word,” also covered a few years ago by Karrin Allyson. “The Song is You” fairly bursts with joy.

Johnny Mandel’s melancholy ode to love and loss “Living Without You” is a great choice for Henderson’s endearing confessional style. “Tulip or Turnip” is a clever finale, bringing good humor to self-doubt.

Henderson’s voice is a warm and supple instrument that is never too far from the roots of gospel, soul and the blues. With “Beautiful Memory,” he has reestablished his reputation as one of the best male jazz vocalists of the last 50 years. Let’s hope there are many memories yet to come.



SONNY ROLLINS
Road Shows, Vol. 1
 Doxy Records

Sonny Rollins’ tightrope-walking, extended improvisations on the tenor saxophone are best appreciated in live performance, but—like anyone—he is not always at the top of his game.

That's what makes "Road Shows, Vol. 1" so enjoyable. It serves up some of the best Rollins recordings captured over the last several decades and instantly re-establishes his credentials as a giant among jazzmen.

Totaling nearly 72 minutes, the seven tracks were recorded between 1980 and 2007, reminding us again of the tremendous breadth and depth of the Rollins oeuvre. Rollins has been recording since the early 1950s and continues to perform at age 78.

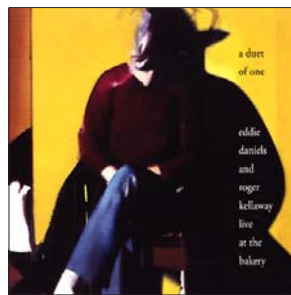
"Best Wishes," from a May 25, 1986, performance in Tokyo, virtually surges with that famous Rollins enthusiasm and visceral power. From there we are transported to Toulouse, France, for a 2006 concert and an incredible version of the ballad standard "More Than You Know." It offers the trademark Rollins at his finest, inserting and embellishing familiar musical quotations with ease. Previously unrecorded, "Blossom" is taken from a 1980 jazz festival in Sweden. It has Rollins on fire, ably aided and abetted by pianist Mark Soskin, bassist Jerome Harris and drummer Al Foster.

Congress Hall in Warsaw 1980 is the unusual setting for an emotionally charged performance of the ballad "Easy Living." Soskin apparently was provided with a piano that had not been properly tuned and voiced, but he overcomes its shortcomings with a great solo. In his solo cadenza, Rollins takes the tune—and the listener—on a bold excursion to new, uncharted and thrilling territory.

Rollins revisits "Tenor Madness" in spectacular form during a 2000 performance in Tama City, Japan. His squalling, snarling sax righteously explores the blues changes from every angle. No Rollins collection would be complete without a calypso, and his "Nice Lady" serves the purpose well in a 12-minute performance recorded in Victoria, B.C., in 2007. Anderson turns in a fine extended solo before turning it over to Uncle Sonny.

Rollins has maintained a loyal coterie of musicians over the years and most of them are represented here—trombonist Anderson, guitarist Bobby Broom, pianists Soskin and Stephen Scott, bassists Bob Cranshaw and Harris, and drummers Foster, Victor Lewis, Perry Wilson, and Steve Jordan. The closer, "Some Enchanted Evening," is a rare and very special trio performance with bassist Christian McBride and drummer Roy Haynes.

Of course, the amazing music contained in "Road Shows, Vol. 1" begs the obvious question. When can we expect more of the best from the living master of the tenor sax?



EDDIE DANIELS & ROGER KELLAWAY
A Duet of One: Live at the Bakery
IPO Recordings

Aptly named, "A Duet of One" rightfully implies the singularity of purpose, the extrasensory dialogue and the compatible virtuosity of clarinetist Eddie Daniels and pianist Roger Kellaway. It also implies the seat-of-the-pants immediacy of its live setting, The Jazz Bakery in Los Angeles, where it was recorded March 30 to April 2, 2005.

Daniels and Kellaway quickly establish their amazing talents with "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," taken at a swinging mid-tempo that gently urges the participants to ever higher feats of improvisation and oneness. Equally proficient on tenor

saxophone, Daniels here eschews that instrument's larger, robust and metallic sound for the brighter, woodier tone of the clarinet. The result is a more level playing field for the two featured instruments, and the two artists respond accordingly.

Daniels' composition "Slow Dance" is, indeed, a swirling, terpsichorean delight that inspires splendid solo statements from each of the dance "partners." His tune "Adagio Swing" liberates Daniels to soar on a solo clarinet flight before turning it over to Kellaway, whose two-fisted technique simultaneously maintains a pulsing, left-hand rhythm pattern while ascending into the upper registers with the right.

Their whimsical, imaginative performance of "I Want to Be Happy" is as carefree and exuberant as its title. Free of a rigid rhythm pattern, Daniels and Kellaway carry on a very high-brow jazz conversation—making solo statements, responding with witty repartee and occasionally mixing it up in a polite "shouting" match. Hoagy Carmichael's "New Orleans" gets a relaxed, bluesy reading in which the two instruments blend beautifully in pitch and mood.

Kellaway's loping, rhythmically ambiguous "This Is the Time" ironically leaves the listener wondering exactly where the "time" is. Would-be dancers, beware! The two return to more familiar ground with a dazzling uptempo display of technique on the standard "After You've Gone." They trade fours with ease, continuously upping the ante for the next smoking chorus and inspiring the audience to enthusiastic applause.

"Blue Waltz," another Daniels tune, is a perfect vehicle for the composer's warm and woody clarinet at a meditative ballad tempo. On his ballad "Love of My Life," it is Kellaway's turn to romanticize and he

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does so with tenderness, grace and beauty. "We'll Always Be Together" is Daniels' lyrical statement of hope and the embodiment of this joyful and fruitful duo collaboration.

Not released until 2008, this very live session is another jewel from IPO Recordings, which is responsible for another of last year's best jazz CDs, the collaboration between James Moody and Hank Jones called "Our Delight." The label has wisely chosen to focus on seasoned musicians who are still performing at a very high level of creativity and have not gotten the attention they deserve.



MARK WINKLER
Till I Get It Right
FreeHam Records

"Till I Get It Right" is the welcome return of jazzy vocalist Mark Winkler, six years after his wonderful tribute to Bobby Troup, the composer of such hip classics as "Route 66." His latest release is a showcase for his own lyric-writing talents and his ability to shift gears from uptempo swingers to romantic ballads.

Based in Los Angeles, Winkler has assembled a crack West Coast band that includes saxophonist Bob Sheppard, guitarist Anthony Wilson, trumpeter Ron Blake, keyboardist Jamieson Trotter, bassist Dan Lutz and drummer Steve Hass.

On the title track, Trotter doubles on piano and Hammond B3 to create a funky, propulsive kick with

a walking bass line and an wailing tenor sax solo that combines for a dazzling opener. Winkler's smooth, relaxed delivery reminds the listener why he is often compared with such vocal stylists as David Frishberg, Michael Franks and Mark Murphy, a Winkler fan who contributed the liner notes.

Winkler cleverly celebrates gormandizing while thumbing his nose at the diet-crazy world with "How Can That Make You Fat?" On the Marilyn Harris tune "Cool," he croons his original lyrics soulfully and sexily in duet with Cheryl Bentyne of Manhattan Transfer. "Cool" also features some very cool bass work by Lutz.

"Spring Is Where You Are" is a love ballad written by Steve Allen, another prolific tunesmith with a penchant for clever lyrics and the sound of cool. Wilson's guitar is a perfect foil for Winkler's touching rendition. Joshua Redman's "lowercase," with lyrics by Winkler and Lori Barth, seems an unconventional choice, but the bluesy, moody tune works well and is assisted by Sheppard's marvelous tenor sax playing and the intense drumming of Hass.

Winkler pays homage to Truman Capote on "Sissies," with music by collaborator Louis Durra. "In a Lonely Place" is another Marilyn Harris composition, this time a sensitive ballad with Winkler lyrics and featuring Blake on muted trumpet and Trotter on piano. The Harris-Winkler tune "Future Street" is an easy-swinging blues with enticing lines such as, "There's a girl that's waiting for me, with tomorrow in her eyes."

The Ivan Lins samba "Evolution" gets a new coat of paint with lyrics by Brock Walsh that draw the conclusion that "evolution is a state of mind." Winkler's descriptive words for Durra's "How to Pack a Suitcase" tell a witty tale of the sweet sorrow of parting. "In the Moment" is a romantic Mike Melvoin tune with a

Latin lilt and some nice acoustic guitar-piano trades.

"You Might as Well Live," a dreamy, bittersweet ballad by Dan Siegel with lyrics by Winkler and Harris, closes the set with a message of spiritual courage and triumph over life's challenges and disappointments.



THE SONS OF BRASIL
While You Were Out
Standing Bear Records

With a reputation so firmly established in the world of Latin jazz and, in particular, those subgenres of Brazilian samba, bossa nova and choro, it comes as a great surprise that The Sons of Brazil had, until recently, only one recording in 17 years. To the band's enthusiastic fan base, which extends well beyond its Kansas City, Mo., home, the arrival of "While You Were Out" is long overdue.

The **Berman Music Foundation** has followed the evolution of The Sons and its featured players with much interest, featuring the ensemble as part of the local Jazz in June series in 2002 and 2007 and catching them whenever possible on their home turf.

For their latest outing, trumpeter Stan Kessler has once again assembled some of KC's finest musicians, including guitarist Danny Embrey, pianist Roger Wilder, bassist Greg Whitfield, drummer Doug Auwarter and percussions Gary Helm. On two tracks, Luiz Orsano is added on percussion.

It is refreshing that most of the 13 tunes were written by band mem-

bers, with only two covers by Brazilian master Antonio Carolos Jobim, one by Joao Bosco and one by Jose Roberto Bertrami. Kessler's warm and breezy flugelhorn set the mood for his set-opening tune, "Joao." Embrey and Wilder expand on that mood with gently swinging solos.

Whitfield establishes the funky, fusion underpinnings of Bertrami's "Partido Alto," inspiring Wilder to a Herbie Hancock-style foray on the electric keyboard, and Kessler's playing is reminiscent of the late, great Freddie Hubbard in his bright, spirited solo. Embrey contributed three tunes, including the melodic masterpiece "Journey," which gives the guitarist an opportunity to explore imaginative changes with his deft fretwork.

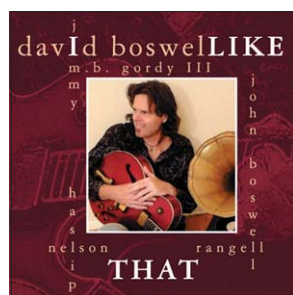
Kessler gives the Jobim classic "Desafinado" a respectful arrangement that emphasizes his luxurious flugelhorn tone against Wilder's piano harmonies and a brief, but brilliant Embrey solo. With Kessler's "Salvador," the band returns to a pumping, rhythmic feel, featuring the composer's soaring trumpet and Orsano adding another layer of polyrhythmic percussion.

"Bala Com Bala," by Bosco, has a clever circular pattern that gives the piece an infectious forward motion and keeps the musicians and the listener enthralled. Kessler's playing is simply virtuosic in its confidence and execution. "Migration" is a gentle Embrey composition with some intriguingly melancholy "blue" chords that resolve upward, finally creating a more affirmative mood. The title track, a collaboration between Whitfield and Kessler, churns with a driving bass line, some two-fisted playing by Wilder and some high-note pyrotechnics by Kessler, capped by a percussion tour de force.

Jobim's "Surfboard" does seem to ride the crest of a wave. You can almost feel the ocean spray in its leaping chord structure and the lilting per-

formances by all. "I've Got Samba" is Kessler's rambunctious tribute to the genre that popularized the dance-friendly music of Brazil for millions of Americans. Embrey's romantic ballad "Tell Me Now" is exquisitely beautiful, and it gets the perfect backing with Kessler's sensitive flugelhorn and Wilder's understated piano anchoring the guitarist's melodic treatment. Wilder contributed the gently swaying and curiously titled "Esso Bees." The set ends with Kessler's strutting, bluesy "If It Feels Good."

Perhaps as a nod to their loyal fans in Lincoln, most of the photos included in the CD liner are from that memorable Jazz in June concert of 2007, shot by BMF photographer Rich Hoover. "While You Were Out" is definitely IN, in the coolest sense of the word.



DAVID BOSWELL
I Like That
My Quiet Moon Records

Guitarist David Boswell is among the many fusion jazz pickers who openly emulate Pat Metheny, arguably the most influential guitarist of the last 30 years. Boswell, a San Francisco native, goes so far as to characterize a Metheny concert that he attended at age 16 as "a religious experience."

Boswell's approach to the music is not mere slavish duplication. With his third solo effort, 2009's "I Like That," he builds on the fusion model with a strong band of like-minded adventurers, including Yellowjackets bassist Jimmy Haslip, saxophonist

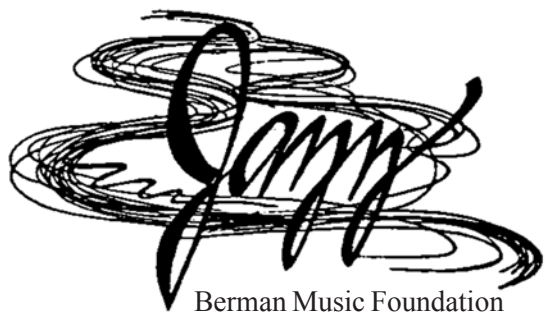
Nelson Rangell (on three tracks), his brother John Boswell on piano, and drummer M.B. Gordy III. The result is a product with crossover potential with jazz, rock and New Age fans.

With Boswell on assorted electric and acoustic guitars, mandolin, synthesized guitar, keys and voice, the title track is a paean to Metheny's breezy style and wide-ranging technique. Like his mentor, Boswell builds the intensity to a breath-taking climax. On "Tightrope," A serious funk backbeat, Rangell's keening sax and Haslip's solid rhythmic foundation form a potent backdrop for Boswell's rock guitar excursion. "It's Possible" combines unison guitar and sax lines to a decidedly mellowing effect, rather like a cup of herbal tea.

Metheny is again evoked on the beautiful "Awaken the Gentle Giant," with multi-tracked vocal harmonies and John Boswell's meditative piano leading into a dynamic Haslip solo and a soaring synth guitar interlude. "Little Steps on a Long Road," like "Awaken," marries a soaring guitar with wordless vocals. One of the most interesting tracks is "Come and Get Me," with Boswell playing all the instruments, including guitars, keys, synthesizer, bass and voice.

"Across the Plains" is an unfortunate allusion to Metheny's Plains-themed tunes, but the Missouri-born Metheny comes by his inspiration naturally. On "Westward Path" the solo Boswell evokes a rural flavor on mandolin and a keyboard "harmonica" sound, avoiding easy comparisons and creating a simple, but endearing melody.

While Boswell occasionally takes a bold step away from the Metheny camp, he eventually returns to safer ground. Until the guitarist finds a truly individual sound and breaks the Metheny mold, he will forever be compared with his elder, who is a much more sophisticated composer and player.



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From the Archives

Butch, Kendra Shank and Russ Dantzler in NYC



File Photo

Butch Berman and singer Kendra Shank were fast friends since BMF consultant Russ Dantzler first introduced them in New York City in 1995. In this photo, Shank is flanked by Butch and Russ. Shank and her band will return to Lincoln for a Jazz in June performance on June 16. Shank once referred to Butch Berman as "a jazz evangelist."

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