

Cover photos by Rich Hoover

Eldar Djangirov wows crowd with his amazing technique

Djangirov performance draws standing ovations

By Tom Ineck

Eldar Djangirov, the 14-year-old jazz piano wunderkind from Kyrgyzstan, hit a home run his first time at bat playing to a Lincoln audience June 12, the second concert in the 10th anniversary Jazz in June series at Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery Sculpture Garden.

The Tuesday evening series was stretched to six weeks to celebrate the first decade of free concerts, sponsored by the Nebraska Art Association with help from corporate and foundation funding. The season also featured strong performances by the Rhythm Club Orchestra on June 26 and the Darryl White Quintet on July 3 and a disappointing season opener by the Daugherty McPartland Group on June 5 (*reviewed in the Tomfoolery column elsewhere in this edition of Jazz*).

Sponsored by the **Berman Music Foundation**, Djangirov's astounding performance wowed the crowd — estimated at 4,000 people — into multiple standing ovations, a first for Jazz

in June. Bassist Gerald Spaits and drummer Todd Strait, his regular Kansas City bandmates, accompanied him. The same trio is featured on Djangirov's recently released CD debut.

Like his recent performance at the Topeka Jazz Festival (*reviewed elsewhere in this issue of Jazz*), Djangirov

began with a bravura rendition of Clifford Brown's "Daahoud," alternating double-octave phrases and single-note runs. He followed with a bluesy, two-fisted take on Ornette Coleman's "Turn-around."

The first surprise of the evening was the young pianist's choice of the old warhorse "Slow Boat to China," which the trio updated with a very hip interpretation. Marian McPartland's "Afterglow" shimmered with imaginative keyboard harmonies, and "Lester Leaps In" leaped with virtuosic runs reminiscent of Oscar Peterson's powerful pyrotechnics.

Djangirov displayed his penchant
(Djangirov continued on pg. 3)



Eldar signs autographs for his throng of fans

Fall 2001

Vol. 6, Number 5

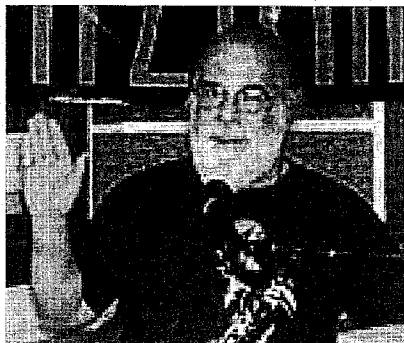
In this issue of Jazz....

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Djangirov..... | 1 |
| The Prez Sez..... | 2 |
| Hedman at the Lied..... | 4 |
| Tomfoolery..... | 5 |
| Karrin Allyson..... | 6 |
| Lady Day..... | 7 |
| Jazz on Disc..... | 8 |
| Topeka Jazz Fest..... | 9 |
| Unsung Hero..... | 14 |
| Discorama..... | 15 |
| Joe Henderson..... | 16 |
| Jazz on the Radio..... | 17 |
| Sam Phillips..... | 18 |
| Jazz in the Venues..... | 18 |
| Blues on Disc..... | 19 |
| Blues Corner..... | 19 |
| Jazz Sabbatical..... | 19 |

Prez Sez

2001-02 jazz scene looks promising

By Butch Berman



Dear Everybody,

I rarely start anything with an apology, but to you our readers and to our artist, sort of in residence – percussionist extraordinaire - Norman Hedman – sorry – the entire BMF staff had a Gang Goof as we all thought Norman's superb Lied Center performance was included in our last issue – including Tom, who took notes as usual at the concert, and all of our proofreaders who missed it...anyway, I guess, a good review is never too late.

Now – onward...I mustn't forget to welcome back Mark Dalton, writing a splendid story on Sam Phillips' visit to Seattle; and to introduce you to the writing style of my old pal Blade (John Wiederspan) on his perception on the state of the art of jazz.

As usual, the Topeka Jazz Festival was a complete and total gas. In my opinion – Monty Alexander has always kinda stole the show – but hearing Ray Brown's thundering bass was a close second with all other acts complying to a well-balanced three-day extravaganza. The weather was beautiful – and everyone – musicians and guests alike dug staying at the Capitol Plaza Hotel (Topeka's version of our new Embassy Suites). Check out our fab pictures, Tom's review, and Bill Wimmer's first-timer's account of his Kansas jazz festival week-

end to give you the entire Topeka Jazz Festival picture. The only thing missing is you, our readers – if you haven't made it yet – run, don't walk to your mailbox with next year's early bird application (yup – you can save a few bucks here) to attend. If you go once – you'll go every year – it's just that good.

As usual – a lot of good stuff is coming our way due to the BMF's festival schmoozing.

I finally got to meet my fave Monty Alexander and his lovely wife Caterina Zapponi during our dinner meeting at the hotel. After discovering that we were all old friends who just hadn't met yet – my mind started to buzz...and yes – get ready – Monty is coming to Lincoln for my 53rd, B-day bash. Saturday, March 9th (my birthday is March 10th, but I didn't want to do the gig on Sunday). We are working to finalize the venue at the Royal Grove (don't freak – it's not the same tough joint it was when we were kids) – it's got the best sound, lights, and stage in town with perfect sightlines and a dance floor to boot with ample parking. If reggae goes over big there – then Monty Alexander's jazzy Jamaican influence should make this a barnburner not to be missed. We're just getting started with negotiations – so hang in there, keep your fingers crossed, and leave the driving to us. Jazz at the Grove – why the hell not?

Next – on September 20th – we align with Dean Haist Enterprises to book an occasional Thursday at P.O. Pears – so get ready for probably KC's hottest pianist, Joe Cartwright and his trio.

We gabbed at the festival, I put it together with Dean, and we obtained a nice grand from Keith Heckman at Dietze Music House – now, ya'll just

come and pack the place to show that we can dig jazz here as much as they do in KC.

Got to hang with my old friend, Karrin Allyson, who sang beautifully all weekend pushing her newest, and one of my all-time favorite Karrin Allyson CDs (Ballads: Remembering John Coltrane). We're hosting her again with her top-notch KC band along with a string section this time to perform for you all again at the always great to work with Lied Center and their excellent staff. Mark the date, November 9th on your calendar – this should be truly lovely.

Of course – what more can you say about "The Kid" – 14-year-old piano jazz genius and prodigy Eldar Djangirov stole the show at Jazz in June with a record attendance – three standing Os and an encore – all firsts. Eldar tore up at the Topeka Jazz Festival and repeated with his straight-ahead trio (Gerald Spaits on bass and Todd Strait on drums) on June 12th (see review on page 1). I was at my proudest after the show on all counts...of Lincoln finally showing their love and respect for jazz and the performer, and the marvy job this young man did, blowing all the minds of all those present. We're trying to bring Eldar back next year to do a show with the NJO – stay posted, as we'll stay toasted.

...And last but not least – the Topeka Jazz Festival bossman and founder – Mr. Jim Monroe and their director of marketing, Kate Hastings, visited me and Tony Rager (my legal liason from Cline Williams) to see how much further the BMF could collaborate with them to make this already fine musical experience even better down the line. Ideas and ban-

(Prez Sez continued on pg. 3)

(Prez Sez continued from pg. 2)

ter were tossed around with no ego problems, so soon as we can let you know of some possible changes that could occur from the sum of the parts addressed at this junction – it'll probably be our cover story in the near future.

I'm probably leaving something out – but need to close and make room for...the rest of the story. I must mention – we lost some heavy hitters since the last issue – Billy Higgins, Joe Henderson, Chet Atkins, and John Lee Hooker are big chunks of musical history. As we get older, it has to happen, but no one's ever ready. Just keep their flames lit by always appreciating your artist, seeing them when you can and supporting them by keeping abreast of all their impeccable recordings. People will die, but their glorious music can live forever in our hearts and on our stereo systems. I think I'll end on this note. Have a great summer.

Your jazz master,

Butch Berman

Butch Berman

P.S. Billy Higgins was one of the first jazz performers I ever saw. I was preparing a letter to him when I heard he was ailing, now due to his passing let me share a segment of my never sent letter with you, my readers, as a bit of a tribute. RIP Billy.

Dear Billy,

I've loved you, your persona, and music since your early days with Ornette. I first caught you "live" in San Francisco at the now defunct Milestones backing Frank Morgan with Cedar and David Williams; and several times since at the "old" Yoshi's as well as the Vanguard in New York. Your chops, professional attitude, and ever-present smile made you a major jazz icon in my book.

(Djangirov continued from pg. 1)

for tunes of the early bebop era with "All the Things You Are," Tadd Dameron's "Ladybird" and Charlie Parker's "Confirmation." Best of all was his playful, uptempo arrangement of Thelonious Monk's "Well You Needn't."

He also introduced three superb original compositions, the mid-tempo "Recollection," which shifts from mid-tempo bossa to straight 4/4 time, the funky "Rhododendron" and "In the Haze," a mysterious melody with some enchanting chord changes.

Despite his elfish physical stature, Djangirov had a commanding presence when he attacked "Body and Soul" with powerful right-hand flourishes. On a solo rendition of "Sweet Georgia Brown," he pulled out all the stops, changing tempos, conjuring the ghost of Art Tatum with a loping stride piano, then shifting to Errol Garner-style octaves.

Whether ranging over the keyboard with spellbinding speed on "Scapple from the Apple," or swinging with authority on "Take the A Train," Djangirov never merely repeated shopworn phrases or conventional jazz licks, but truly created art at a very high level of improvisation. Such accomplished playing at age 14 is incredible and bodes well for the young musician's future.



Rich Claussen briefs crowd on Jazz in June protocol, as Eldar looks on

Jazz is usually published six times a year by **The Berman Music Foundation**, 719 P St., Studio G, Lincoln, NE 68508.

Editor: Dave Hughes

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Contributing writers: Butch Berman, Dan Demuth, Rich Hoover, Dave Hughes, Mark Dalton, Tom Ineck, & Bill Wimmer.
Photographers: Butch Berman, Rich Hoover, Tom Ineck, and Glennda Magner.

For inclusion of any jazz or blues related events, letters to the editor, or suggested articles, you can either mail them to the office, phone us at 402-476-3112, fax us at 402-475-3136, or e-mail us at: bermanmf@inetnebr.com. Our website address is: www.bermanmusicfoundation.org

For advertising information, contact Butch Berman at 402-488-1398. A business card sized ad for one issue is \$25, a half-page ad for one issue is \$100. Discounts apply for six month or one year rates.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, call us at 402-476-3112, fax us at 402-475-3136, or e-mail us at: bermanmf@inetnebr.com.

Jazz is printed by **PIP Printing** at 237 South 70th St. in Lincoln, 402-483-4166; and sorted and mailed by **All Needs Computer** at 5606 S. 48th St., also in Lincoln, 402-421-1083.

The Butch Berman Charitable Music Foundation

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 in order to protect and promote unique forms of jazz music.

Trustee: Butch Berman

Consultants: Dan Demuth, Norman Hedman, Dave Hughes, and Wade Wright

Photo by Rich Hoover

Lied Center concert shows two faces of Latin jazz

By Tom Ineck

Norman Hedman's Tropique warmed an audience of 800 with its combustible tropical jazz in a March 24 concert at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

By opening for Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band, Tropique clearly defined its smoother, brighter sound in contrast to Fort Apache's edgier, bop-influenced attack. The concert was a good lesson in the diversity of jazz styles, especially in the Latin realm, where the Afro-Cuban model is the standard with which most people are familiar.

With its frontline instrumentation of vibes (A.J. Mantas), flute (Craig Rivers) and saxophone (Roger Byam) and the rhythm section consisting of pianist Misha Tsyganov, bassist Ron Monroe, timbales master Willie Martinez and leader Hedman on congas, Tropique adheres more closely to the model established by Cal Tjader, with echoes of Hedman's other main influences, Mongo Santamaria and Armando Peraza.

Tropique drew its set list primarily from the band's recent Arabesque release "Taken By Surprise," recorded in New York City in August 1999 and produced by the **Berman Music Foundation**. Having attended and reported on those recording sessions for *Jazz*, I was anxious to hear the same tunes performed live on the Lied Center stage in a performance also made possible by the BMF.

Getting things off to a churning, rhythmic start was "Pa' Bailar," with Hedman patiently setting the pace on congas as the tune built in intensity, leading first to a piccolo flute solo, then to a polyrhythmic timbales statement, all the while urged on by a percussive piano riff.

"Rudy's Mambo" was a perfect example of how well this band works

together as a unit. Against an infectious rhythm set down by bass, piano and percussion, the alto sax, flute and vibes stated the melody in unison. Mantas then took a spirited solo, followed by a driving alto solo and Tsyganov's brief, but enthusiastic keyboard statement.

From the "One Step Closer" CD came "Flight of the Spirit," with Monroe setting the mood on kalimba (or African thumb piano) and Hedman's expert conga playing fortifying the traditional African flavor. After solos by Tsyganov and Martinez, Hedman returned with a series of inspired conga breaks that powered the tune to its conclusion.

Tsyganov's exuberant composition "That Unpredictable Eugene" displayed the pianist's way with complex changes, aided by thrilling solos from Rivers on flute and Byam on tenor sax. On "Soft Serenade," Rivers and Byam stated the beautiful melody on dual flutes, creating a light, shimmering sound, before turning it over to piano and vibes for short solos and a final return to the flute twosome.

The highlight of the concert was the exciting "Light at the End of the Tunnel," a tune that built from a simple melody line combining Byam's tenor sax, Rivers' piccolo and Mantas' vibes to a series of solo breaks that raised the intensity level to exhilarating heights. Like the original studio recording, the live version was a masterpiece of musical dynamics.

Martinez played master of ceremonies on "One For Ahmad," deftly conducting with the wave of a timbales stick, counting off segues between solos. Hedman's loving tribute to his wife, "Micheline," was stated by Mantas on vibes before Tsyganov took a sensitive solo.

"Head Theme" was Hedman's grand, uptempo finale, featuring suc-

cessive solos by Byam on alto sax, Rivers on flute, Mantas on vibes, Monroe on bass, Martinez on timbales and, finally, Hedman on congas. Throughout the performance, Hedman proved a most democratic leader, emphasizing the group sound over individual virtuosity.

By comparison with Tropique's warm, listener-friendly approach, the Fort Apache Band seemed aloof, even detached from its audience. Leader Jerry Gonzalez ignored the house while he absently tuned the congas, getting things off to an uncomfortable start.

There is no mistaking the technical virtuosity of the Fort Apache Band, an Afro-Cuban-style quintet featuring the superb playing of saxophonist Joe Ford, pianist Larry Willis, bassist Andy Gonzalez, drummer Steve Berrios and conguero Jerry Gonzalez doubling on trumpet and flugelhorn.

But the result is a frequent lapse into long, rambling and abstract post-bop solos that have the effect of boring the listener, especially after hearing Tropique's more focused and melodic group sound. As on the band's 1996 live recording "Fire Dance" at Blues Alley in Washington, D.C., the "tunes" stretched up to 20 minutes each.

An eccentric hipster, Gonzalez not only refrained from announcing the tunes or any other audience banter, he obsessively doted on his drums, his horns and his bandmates, effectively creating a gulf between musician and listener. It was reminiscent of Miles Davis' behavior, which often was interpreted (rightly or wrongly) as rudeness.

Despite brilliant bursts of musicianship, mostly from Willis and Ford, the overall reaction of this listener was "Why should I care?" I prefer the warmth of Tropique to Fort Apache's cold shoulder.

Tomfoolery:

Jazz in June's 10th year features heavy hitters

By Tom Ineck

Young pianist Eldar Djangirov was the undisputed favorite in the 10th anniversary season of the Jazz in June series of outdoor concerts, but there were other performances worth noting.

In contrast with Djangirov's individual display of virtuosity (*reviewed elsewhere in this edition of Jazz*), the Darryl White Quintet showed the importance of experience and a more democratic group interplay in its July 3 performance. The professor of trumpet at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln was accompanied by his occasional working group — saxophonist Gerald Dunn, pianist Jeff Jenkins, bassist Artie Moore and drummer Mike Warren.

White's confidence and clarity of tone are out of the Clifford Brown school of trumpet playing, though his dark, modal moods and his choice of tunes are more reminiscent of Miles Davis. Indeed, the opener was Davis' "Jean Pierre," complete with extended notes, abstract phrasing and a funky backbeat.

"Ancient Memories" the title track from White's most recent CD, was a group effort that featured solos by White, Dunn on tenor sax and Jenkins on piano. Dunn took the spotlight on Kenny Garrett's "Two Step," taking the melody and a soulful solo full of original ideas. Jenkins, a Nebraska City native, contributed a solo that drew on McCoy Tyner.

Jenkins delivered some of the most inspired playing of the evening, taking brilliant solos on Thelonious Monk's "Bemsha Swing," Charles Lloyd's "Sweet Georgia Bright" and Wayne Shorter's "United." It is a tribute to White's evenhanded leadership that he allowed his sidemen such room to stretch out.

Throughout the performance, Moore and Warren anchored the rhythm section with taste and imagination. Warren's punchy, wrist-snapping technique put life into "Sweet Georgia Bright" and Moore created the appropriate groove for "Bemsha Swing."



Darryl White Quintet

But, ultimately, it was White who defined the quintet's style, moving easily from trumpet to flugelhorn and showcasing a number of his own compositions. Especially effective were tunes written for his parents — the ballad for his mother, "Be Sweet," and the memorial to his father, "The Tree is Fallen (But the Roots Will Live Forever)." The latter began with a chilling solo trumpet statement and ended with a trumpet solo that beautifully expressed the title's sentiment.

Whereas the Darryl White Quintet was the quintessence of modern jazz, the Rhythm Club Orchestra was a reminder of the music's roots. In note-for-note transcriptions, the 13-piece Kansas City ensemble recreated the dance music of the 1920s and early 1930s, a transitional period between traditional New Orleans polyphony and the advent of the Swing Era.

The instrumentation also echoed that period with three saxophones, two trumpets, trombone, tuba, three violins, guitar/banjo, piano and drums. Plunger mutes, a bass saxophone and novelty lyrics completed the conservatory-style

approach to the music.

From the early Ellington songbook came "Doin' the Voom Voom," "Gold Digger" and "Jubilee Stomp." The Kansas City sound of Bennie Moten and Count Basie were represented by "Baby Dear" and "Rhumba Negro." Fletcher Henderson's songbook yielded "Copenhagen" and "Song of the Viper," and McKinney's Cotton Pickers got their due with "Crying and Sighing." Even the sweeter, classically oriented English bands contributed to the mix with "Buffalo Rhythm" by the Picadilly Rebels and "Black and Blue Rhythm" by the Jack Hilton Orchestra.

Though devoid of true jazz improvisation, the musicians' expert playing and unswerving fidelity to history legitimized the Rhythm Club Orchestra's literally "dated" performance.

The summertime series hit only one foul ball, and that was the season opener by the Daugherty McPartland Group. The band was at its best on fusion numbers such as Herbie Hancock's "Cantaloupe Island" and Steely Dan's "Do It Again."

But the quintet, co-led by pianist Tim Daugherty and drummer Dennis McPartland, was out of its element when trying to sound jazzy on "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise" and "On Green Dolphin Street" or hip on "Route 66" and "It Don't Mean a Thing (If it Ain't Got That Swing)."

Occasional vocalist Paula Brady did nothing to improve the group's impression on this listener. She absolutely tortured "Take the A Train" with awkward phrasing, poor enunciation and an overall lack of soul. Add to this her tendency to waver off key and the performance became a painful experience. 'Nuff said.

Photo by Tom Ineck

Allyson talks about Coltrane ballad tribute

By Tom Ineck

TOPEKA, Kan. – Singer Karrin Allyson is justifiably enthused about her latest project, the newly released *Ballads: Remembering John Coltrane*.

Between sets at the Topeka Jazz Festival, she took time to sit down and talk about the CD, her seventh and best for Concord Records.

Asked why she chose to recreate the 1962 Coltrane classic *Ballads* in its entirety, with vocal renditions taken in the same order as the original, Allyson immediately warmed to the subject.

"It's a tribute to his beautiful, soulful playing of these standards and the way they were done," she said.

The original *Ballads* recording contains eight tracks and clocks in at just 32 minutes, so Allyson added three tunes that Coltrane recorded on other sessions, including his own composition, "Naima." She and her colleagues also extended some of the improvised solos. For example, Coltrane's "All or Nothing At All" is just three and a half minutes long, but Allyson's is nearly seven minutes.

"We stretched out a little bit, which of course he was famous for. He was so succinct on this particular album that it leaves you wanting more. It's been one of my favorite instrumental albums for quite a while. One night I was listening to it and I thought, 'Wouldn't it be cool if someone were just to sing these down, just like they are.' And then I thought, 'Well, how about me?'"

Both recordings consist of jazz standards, most of which were recorded long before Coltrane did them with his legendary quartet, which also featured pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Jimmy Garrison and drummer Elvin Jones. But Coltrane's rendering was typically exquisite – and influ-

ential – inspiring many popular ballad collections in the four decades since its debut.

"It's really meant with great respect toward his playing," Allyson said of her version of *Ballads*. "It's not meant to sound like him. It's meant



Karrin Allyson

as a very loving tribute. We actually got clearance from Alice Coltrane. She gave us the go-ahead."

To ensure that she achieved the highest possible degree of musicianship and compatibility with Coltrane's style, Allyson hunkered down with pianist James Williams to work out the arrangements. The other musicians on the session were bassist John Patitucci, drummer Lewis Nash and three saxophonists sitting in for the departed master – Bob Berg and James Carter on tenors and Steve Wilson on soprano.

"What I wanted was a piano trio, the same musical vein throughout the recording," Allyson said. "I thought, at first, that we should feature one horn player. That's a big job for one horn player." Instead, she and producer Nick Phillips decided to spread out the work among three of the best reed players in the business.

Before entering the studio, Allyson practiced some of the tunes

with two of her longtime friends and musical cohorts, guitarist Danny Embrey and pianist Laura Caviani.

"We'd been trying these things in the style of (Coltrane) for a little while, but some of them are very, very new to me, at least the way that we do them," she explained. I didn't feel like these tunes were particularly overdone, vocally. You don't hear "Say It (Over and Over Again)," you don't hear "I Wish I Knew."

Among those that have been recorded many times are "You Don't Know What Love Is," "What's New" and "It's Easy to Remember." But it's difficult to find fault with such masterpieces, no matter how many times you've heard them.

Two selections – "Too Young to Go Steady" and "Nancy (With the Laughing Face)" – proved lyrically challenging. The protagonist of the former is obviously much younger than the singer, and the latter was written specifically for Frank Sinatra to sing to his daughter, Nancy, later known for her million-seller "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'."

Allyson solved the dilemma by deftly tailoring her interpretations. For "Nancy," her phrasing is a third-person observation, and for "Too Young" the title phrase is merely a metaphor for unrequited love.

Allyson herself arranged the haunting, wordless "Naima." Her vocalise seems to rise out of the ether, sounding much like the saxophone of John Coltrane at his most spiritual.

"We did think about putting lyrics to it," she said. "In fact, two people we asked did put lyrics to it. But, I never really wanted to do it with lyrics. Monumental jazz tunes, when (Allyson continued on pg. 7)

Photo by Tom Ineck

(Allyson continued from pg. 6)

they get lyrics to them, really sound corny, unless it's a great lyric. But I wanted to do it justice and I didn't want to take away from the tune."

In addition to the great music contained therein, *Ballads: Remembering John Coltrane* also boasts liner notes by veteran jazz critic Nat Hentoff and a seductive photo spread of Allyson, all guaranteed to attract new fans.

A recent career move from Kansas City to New York City also has proven fruitful.

"I like it very much," she said of her new home. "But, I'm not there that much." In other words, her performance schedule has shifted from doing five nights a week at local clubs in her former hometown of Kansas City to making more prestigious appearances worldwide.

She recently returned from a

transatlantic cruise, her first experience performing in a floating venue, and the *Ballads* tour is off to a great start with early stops in California, the Twin Cities, Chicago, the Kansas City Blues and Jazz Festival and the 33rd Annual Fujitsu Concord Jazz Festival. Upcoming dates include a four-night stop at Dimitriou's Jazz Alley in Seattle and two nights at Birdland in New York City.

New management and a new agent should also help to raise Allyson's profile and allow her to concentrate on singing.

"I've done this so long by myself, I'm really happy to have some help. It's not an easy road even when you have all kinds of help."

Bill McGlaughlin, perhaps best known as the longtime host of National Public Radio's *St. Paul Sunday Morning*, worked alongside

Allyson in the studio during the "Ballads" sessions, though not as arranger.

"Bill is my help in the studio, since he's so good in the studio and knows my singing," Allyson said. "Our collaboration is subtle."

McGlaughlin, however, is more involved in another aspect of Allyson's career, her relatively recent venture into orchestral music. Last spring, they appeared in concert with members of the Omaha Symphony Orchestra.

On Nov. 9, they will take the stage of the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln for a similar performance, entitled *Jazz with Strings Attached*. Pianist Paul Smith, guitarist Rod Fleeman, bassist Bob Bowman and drummer Todd Strait will accompany Allyson in the concert, sponsored by the **Berman Music Foundation**.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill

By Butch Berman

Admitting to occasionally being an entertainment snob about what goes on here locally as opposed to my former gallivanting coast-to-coast hotspot lifestyle – I almost flinched when my assistant Ruthann suggested something 'bout an Omaha dinner theater doing some kinda show on Billie Holiday, and would I like to get tickets and head up there.

Now driving eastward, I mumbled to myself about the Lincoln/Omaha traffic snarl due to President Bush and the College World Series all this same night... this better be good.

Well, after attending Lanie Robertson's wonderful New York screenplay – *Lady Day at the Emerson Bar and Grill*, performed to a "T" by the very talented Shirley Tyree at the ever so quaint and groovy Dundee Dinner Theater – I was blown

away, and still felt the buzz of the excitement of the evening the next day.

All jazz lovers dig Billie Holiday – but today a star of her caliber with similar problems would be treated more like Robert Downey, Jr. with multiple choices and high hopes – in the '30s to '50s – a black woman junkie, who had an attitude to boot, and made poor choices in her men, became a victim, shunned from performing, jailed instead of being rehabilitated and died at 44 from as much a broken heart as the ravages of heroin and alcohol on her body and soul.

Ms. Tyree, accompanied ably by Jim Boggess and under the fine direction of Bill Bohannon, told a story within a story of Billie's tragic life put to music with even a touch of humor thrown in amongst the pain. Interwoven are segments of many of her famed tunes and a singing voice that

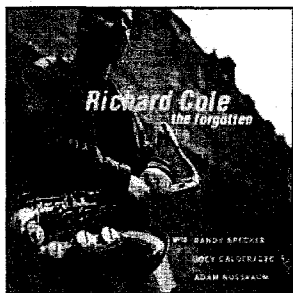
never really sounded like Ms. Holiday, but her acting and believability of her role made her looks almost eerily transform her into Billie before my tearful front row eyes. A beautiful job well done. Ms. T did this play in 1993, and reprised it in a two week-end sold out gig at the Dundee Dinner Theater – turned very realistically into a NY Cabaret.

I'd see this show again and look forward to future return trips to the Dundee Dinner Theater for more pleasant hospitality and performances. Bravo to Shirley Tyree – girl, you sent me and opened a lot of eyes to situations somewhat improved over Ms. Holiday's time, but not enough to make us forget our shame. *Lady Day at the Emerson Bar and Grill* is a most wonderful reminder.

Jazz on Disc

Saxophonist Cole burns with intensity

By Tom Ineck



RICHARD COLE **The Forgotten** Origin Records

Occasionally an artist comes along who mixes all the right ingredients and creates a surprisingly heady brew for the first-time listener.

Such an artist is tenor saxophonist Richard Cole, and the intoxicating brew is called *The Forgotten*, but there is no forgetting this incendiary performance. Aided and abetted by some of the top hard-bop players around, Cole's big sound, brash attack and inventive phrasing are reminiscent of big leaguers like John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins.

The opener is Cole's composition "Any Skynyrd," which also features some outstanding playing by trumpeter Randy Brecker. Irving Berlin's "The Best Thing For You" is taken at a breakneck tempo that brings out the best in pianist Joey Calderazzo and crack drummer Adam Nussbaum. In fact, the tenor/drum section is one of the most exciting moments on the record.

"Angel Eyes" has been done a zillion times, but Cole's dark, sardonic interpretation and uptempo

bridge open new vistas on an old standard. Cole solos with soulful lyricism and imagination. "Without a Song" also gets a fresh treatment with an arrangement by bassist Chuck Bergeron and another brilliant trumpet contribution by Brecker.

Bergeron provides a consistently solid bass anchor throughout the recording, allowing Cole to go on his extended tenor excursions without losing sight of the groove. Recorded in Seattle, *The Forgotten* also is noteworthy for its lesser-known sidemen – John Hansen and Randy Porter on piano, David Peterson on guitar and Gary Hobbs on drums.



ROSEANNA VITRO **Conviction: Thoughts of Bill Evans** A Records

Vitro's eighth recording has an increasingly familiar theme – a homage to influential pianist Bill Evans, who died 20 years ago. A lyrical player with a sizeable songbook of his own compositions, Evans has recently been getting a lot of attention, with memorable tributes by guitarist John McLaughlin, pianist Fred Hersch and arranger Don Sebesky, among others.

As for Vitro, her throaty, lounge style has always left me a bit cold, but these challenging melodies seem to inspire her to greater things. It also helps that pianist Fred Hersch is along for some beautiful duos with Vitro on "Two Lonely People" and "Turn Out the Stars," two of Evans most profound compositions. Former Evans bassist Eddie Gomez also makes an appearance on four tunes, including "My Bells" and "Very Early."

All singers who attempt to interpret Evans must be eternally grateful to jazz critic and sometimes lyricist Gene Lees, who penned the wonderful words for "My Bells," "Turn Out the Stars" and the jazz standard "Waltz For Debbie."



Eldar preparing for Jazz in June

Photo by Rich Hoover

Topeka Jazz Fest exceeds expectations

By Tom Ineck

TOPEKA, Kan. — Just when I had begun to doubt that the Topeka Jazz Festival could continue its ascendancy as one of the greatest jazz gatherings in the world, the event's fourth edition May 26-28 proved me wrong by raising the bar once again.

First, festival organizer and artistic director Jim Monroe upped the ante with an all-star lineup that included The Ray Brown Trio, The

driven festivals where art is treated as a mere commodity.

What follows is just a brief report of some of this year's festival highlights.

Saturday morning's opening performance was a sterling example of things to come.

Fronted by saxophonists Hamilton and festival regular Bob Kindred, it featured the Kansas

City rhythm section of pianist Joe Cartwright, bassist Gerald Spaits and drummer Tommy Ruskin. Hamilton and Kindred playfully sparred with widely differing styles — Hamilton's relaxed, mellifluous tone against Kindred's more aggressive, edgy attack.

On "Moonlight in Vermont," Kindred pinched off each line of the melody, while Hamilton displayed a breathy technique reminiscent of Ben Webster. On the bossa "Gentle Rain," Kindred delivered the melody and an astounding solo, inspiring an equally profound solo from Cartwright, then lively three-way trades between Hamilton, Kindred and Spaits.

But it was a mid-tempo rendi-

tion of "Red Top Blues" that allowed both tenorists to excel, building the intensity with successive so-



Eldar and Berman prepare for his stellar Lincoln show

Photo by Glenda Wagner



TJF founder Jim Monroe and this year's m.c. Dr. John Zimbrick

Photo by Glenda Wagner

Monty Alexander Trio, tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton, pianist Gerald Wiggins, saxophonist Alan Barnes and the big band Frank Capp and Juggernaut. Then, he staged the Memorial Day weekend festival to create imaginative combinations of artists, forcing these world-class musicians into settings that brought out the best in everyone. The artists met the challenge, creating new fans and establishing new bonds with their colleagues.

Finally, the best audience in the festival's history responded with delight and appreciation. This crowd knows and respects good music, a rare thing in an era of commercially

los and patented blues licks.

Even though I had heard numerous recordings by Gerald Wiggins, his live performances were a revelation, a keyboard history lesson combining technique, imagination, wit and grace. The respect of his peers was evident from the start, when the veteran was teamed with bassist Jay Leonhart, drummer Jeff Hamilton



Bob Kindred joins Joe Cartwright, Gerald Spaits, and Tommy Ruskin for the breakfast set

Photo by Rich Hoover

and guitarist Rod Fleeman.

Wiggins strode mightily through

(Topeka continued on pg. 10)

(Topeka continued from pg. 9)

"A Minor Madness," then caressed the keys on "If It Is the Last Thing I Do (I'll Make You Mine)." As if to



First bassman Jay Leonhart from NY

Photo by Rich Hoover
create a dynamic contrast with Wiggins' light touch on "Land o' Dreams," drummer Hamilton pulled out all the stops, injecting powerful

backbeats, rim shots, bass drum accents and foot-tapping. He also demonstrated that he knows the value of restraint, skillfully using brushes for a beautiful rendition of "Body and Soul."

Barnes, an amazingly proficient bop alto saxophonist from England, tore into such classics of the genre as Wes Montgomery's "West Coast Blues" and Dizzy Gillespie's "Wee," using circular breathing on the latter tune to create a new level of intensity. He was ably accompanied by Kansas City stalwarts Russ Long on piano, Bob Bowman on bass, Danny Embrey on guitar and Todd Strait on drums.



Second bassman John Clayton from LA

Photo by Rich Hoover

Another sure-fire match was the "Three Tenors" set teaming

Hamilton, Kindred and Ken Peplowski, another Topeka favorite. They launched into "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To," each taking a solo that illustrated a different approach to the tenor sax.

Al Cohn's bouncy, mid-tempo "P Town," Gershwin's "Embraceable You" and the classic tenor battle anthem "Blues Up and Down" also were ideal vehicles for Hamilton, Kindred and Peplowski's three-way collaborations.

Singer Karrin Allyson's first of three sets over the weekend was a welcome-home appearance for the former Kansas City resident who now calls New York City her home. (*You can read an exclusive interview with Allyson on Page 6 in this issue of Jazz.*)

Allyson and her longtime K.C. friends and accomplices – guitarist Danny Embrey, bassist Bob Bowman and drummer Todd Strait – had just recently returned from a series of performances aboard the transatlantic QE2 cruise ship, and they were primed and ready for the hometown fans. They sailed joyfully through "All of You," Wes Montgomery's "West Coast Blues" and "O Barquinho (My Little Boat)."

Allyson maneuvered skillfully through the unusual changes and beautiful lyrics of Benny Golson's "Whisper Not" before doing a couple of tunes from her latest Concord release, a loving tribute to John Coltrane's "Ballads." The rarely



Third bassman Gerald Spaits from KC

Photo by Rich Hoover

sung "Say it Over and Over" was followed by a stunning rendition of Coltrane's "Naima," with Allyson accompanying her versatile vocalise on piano and Bowman turning in a booming bass solo.

Always a treat at the Topeka fest, the Monty Alexander Trio (this year with bassist Hassan Shakur and drummer Troy Davis) in its first set reached way back to Alexander's Jamaican roots with originals that mixed reggae, gospel and jazz influences.

On "The Reggaeator," the pianist quoted "Ain't Necessarily So" in a dazzling display of uptempo pyrotechnics. He began "Sight Up" in a stride piano style before switching to a reggae beat and quoting "Down by the Riverside."

Alexander's gospel roots were evident on the ballad "Hope," but they emerged again for the bluesy "Renewal," which the composer introduced by saying, "There is always time for a fresh start." A vicious drum introduction set the scene for "Moonlight City," a depiction of the mean streets of Kingston, Alexander's hometown.

The ballads "Got to Go" and "Trust" beautifully exemplified Alexander's more sentimental, lyrical side.

Undoubtedly the most anticipated act at this year's festival was The Ray Brown Trio.

A legendary bassist who has re-



Fourth bassman Bob Bowman from KC

Photo by Rich Hoover

(Topeka continued on pg. 11)

(Topeka continued from pg. 10) maintained at the forefront of mainstream jazz for more than 50 years, Brown currently fronts a typically superb band that also features pianist Larry Fuller, drummer George Fludas and special guest soloist Holly Hofmann on flute.

Launching into a swinging rendition of "You're My Everything," Brown displayed his trademark thundering bass technique. "Honeysuckle Rose" revealed the slow, bluesy element of his playing, and "Whirly Bird," from the Count Basie songbook, was a perfect example of Brown's mid-tempo swing groove, which eventually shifted to high gear without missing a beat.

Brown slyly adapts unlikely tunes to very funky interpretations, such as his arrangement of "You Are My Sunshine." He showed his bowing technique on "Caravan," which also featured a blazing piano solo



KC guitarist Danny Embrey and Karrin Allyson share a moment

by Fuller. The spotlight shifted to Fludas for a drum solo on Ellington's "Happy Go Lucky Local."

Hofmann showed her considerable chops as she joined the trio for

"My Romance" and "Willow Weep for Me," displaying a particularly bluesy inclination in her flute play-



King of the bassman Ray Brown flanked by Leonhard, Spaits, Shakur, and vocalist Karrin Allyson

ing.

By 10 p.m. Saturday, everyone was ready for another dose of Scott Hamilton, and he delivered with a set accompanied by the Kansas City rhythm section of pianist Russ Long, bassist Gerald Spaits and drummer Todd Strait.

They concentrated on well-known standards taken at various tempos, including the bopper "Woody 'n' You," the mid-tempo "Come Rain or Come Shine," the fast-paced "Fascinatin' Rhythm" and the gorgeous Hoagy Carmichael ballad "Skylark." Hamilton's versatility was well established, but the most remarkable moments were his authoritative take on "Fascinatin' Rhythm" and his plangent, soul-searing tone on "Skylark."

Despite a growing weariness, a few audience members were sufficiently intrigued by the teaming of drummer Jeff Hamilton, pianist Gerald Wiggins and bassist John Clayton to stick around for one more set. We were amply rewarded.

Hamilton's wit and incredible percussive technique were evident from the start, a comic take on "I'm an Old Cowhand," complete with hoof-beat drumming. Wiggins' in-

defatigable, inventive spirit spurred the others through a rousing rendition of Cole Porter's "Love for Sale."

Hamilton made brilliant time statements on the aptly named "Five O'clock Whistle." He showed his skill with brushes on the Ellington ballad "Just Squeeze Me," which also featured a masterful bowed bass solo by Clayton.

Sunday morning began with pianist Joe Cartwright's 15-minute solo recital of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," a timeless classic drawing on elements of classical and jazz music. Cartwright, a Kansas City treasure deserving of wider recognition, maneuvered through the piece's difficult dynamics with only a few fluffed notes.



KC guitarist Rod Fleeman serenades the breakfast audience

Ken Peplowski was at the helm for a set that also featured flutist Holly Hofmann, saxophonist Alan Barnes, pianist Cartwright, bassist John Clayton and drummer Jeff Hamilton, an all-star lineup.

Cannonball Adderley's "Wabash" got things off to a roaring start with Peplowski, Hofmann (Topeka continued on pg. 12)

(Topeka continued from pg. 11) and Barnes turning in successive solos and Cartwright laying down a driving, two-fisted bluesy solo reminiscent of the late Gene Harris. Hofmann and Barnes sat out as Peplowski switched to clarinet for a quartet version of Billy Strayhorn's exquisite "Ballad for Very Tired and Very Sad Lotus Eaters."



Englishman Alan Barnes blew up a storm

Photo by Rich Hoover

Hofmann took the melody line and the first solo on "Some-day My Prince Will Come," taken at fast waltz time and spotlighting the whole band. Outstanding solos were delivered by Peplowski on clarinet and Barnes on baritone sax, followed by Cartwright accelerating the tempo with Hamilton, followed by Clayton restating the melody on an arco bass solo before the wind trio returned for a three-way improvisation.

When Karrin Allyson next appeared on stage, she was accompanied by pianist Russ Long, bassist Jay Leonhart and drummer Tommy Ruskin. They played a mix of bop standards, classics of the Great American Songbook and some newer, but well-chosen compositions.

In rapid succession came Charlie Parker's "Yardbird Suite," Hoagy Carmichael's "Skylark," Gershwin's obscure "Little Jazzbird" and the metamorphosis of

"How High the Moon" into Parker's "Ornithology." Allyson gave Long's gorgeous composition "Save That Time" a breath-taking reading before pairing off with Leonhart on his witty tunes "Nothing in Common with the Human Race" and the sly "Robert Frost," with the singer doubling on piano. The quartet returned for a rendition of Clifford Brown's "Jordu" with lyrics by Allyson.

Ray Brown allowed pianist Larry Fuller and drummer George Fludas to fully stretch their playing abilities in a set of tunes by great jazz instrumentalists. They included the relentlessly swinging Wes Montgomery tune "Fried Pies," the J.J. Johnson ballad "Lament" – played as a memorial to the recently deceased composer – a fast waltz version of Thad Jones' "A Child Is Born" and Oliver Nelson's "Stolen Moments."

Fuller sailed through the uptempo cooker "I Should Care," and Fludas' solid drumming was showcased on "Remember." In a



Ken Peplowski waits his turn to solo

Photo by Rich Hoover

humble tribute to his sidemen, Brown exclaimed, "When you get to be my age, you want to get a

bunch of young guys, so all you have to do is hitch 'em up and hold on." The bassist then took the spot-



Photo by Rich Hoover

Tenor man Scott Hamilton takes you there every time

light on his composition, "Phineas Can Be," an homage to pianist Phineas Newborn.

In its Sunday evening set, The Monty Alexander Trio mixed standards and originals for an exhilarating contrast, moving from a very fast rendition of Juan Tizol's "Caravan" to Alexander's medley of the ballad "Consider" and the mid-tempo "You Can See," which he spiced up with a contrapuntal quote from Bach.

Alexander employed the piano strings on Charlie Chaplin's "Smile," then segued from melodica to piano for the funky "Monty's Groove," a tune he recorded with reggae traditionalists Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare. He again showed his gospel roots on "The River," an original tune with flowing, cascading lines.

Alexander's wife, Italian chanteuse Caterina Zapponi, joined the trio for "Estate (Summer)," "Formidable" and the Sinatra trademark (Topeka continued on pg. 13)

(Topeka continued from pg. 12)

"All the Way." Capping the diverse set were the festive Jamaican market song "What a Saturday Night" and Sonny Rollins' "Don't Stop the Carnival."

Scott Hamilton's final appearance of the weekend began at 11 p.m. Sunday with equally matched



Bob Bowman and Eldar strut their stuff before "The Wig" and Gerald Spaits

cohorts Gerald Wiggins on piano, John Clayton on bass and Jeff Hamilton on drums. A speedy rendition of Billy Strayhorn's "Raincheck" set the standard for the set, which also included a mid-tempo take on Ray Noble's "The Touch of Your Lips" and Tadd



The one and only Monty Alexander gets down with John Clayton

Dameron's "If You Could See Me Now."

A Memorial Day tradition continued with another astounding performance by the young Kansas City pianist Eldar Djangirov, this time playing tunes from his re-

cently released debut CD and accompanied by his regular bandmates Gerald Spaits on bass and Todd Strait on drums. Now age 14, Djangirov has virtually grown up in front of the Topeka Jazz Festival audience, having played the event several times.

He began with Clifford Brown's "Daahoud," alternating block chords, double octaves and amazing single-note runs. On Ornette Coleman's bluesy "Turn around," Djangirov accelerated and slowed the tempo at will. The pianist own "Recollection" is a mid-tempo bossa with lovely changes shifting to 4/4 time.

This climatic showcase of adolescent talent also included a playful, faster-than-usual version of Thelonious Monk's "Well, You Needn't" and Djangirov's mysterious "In the Haze." Throughout the set, he exhibited a sure sense of the blues, bop and classical styles that blend so seamlessly in his playing style.

It goes without saying that we anxiously anticipate the 2002 Topeka Jazz Festival, May 25-27. Already booked for the 5th annual fest are the Bill Charlap Trio, the Clayton Brothers Quintet and the Jeff Hamilton Trio. Featured artists new to the event will include pianists Bill Cunliffe and Ted Rosenthal, bassists Peter Washington, John Leitham and Christoph Luty,



Colorado-based BMF consultant Dan Demuth gets chummy with Gerald Wiggins

drummer Kenny Washington, trombonist Wycliffe Gordon, trumpeter Terrell Stafford and vocalist Lynn Roberts. Among returning favorites are pianist Tamir Hendelman, bassist John Clayton, drummer Jeff Hamilton, guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli,



It's Wig's time, backed by Hassan Shukar, as Cartwright, Spaits, and Eldar look on

trombonist Dan Barrett, saxophonists Ken Peplowski and Bob Kindred, alto saxophonist Jeff Clayton and vocalist Rebecca Parris.

Set aside your Memorial Day weekend for a trip to Topeka. Call (785) 234-9800 for more information or to order your tickets.



After hours merriment with Butch Berman, Monty Alexander, and his wife Caterina

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Glenda Wagner

Unsung Heroes

Topeka Jazz Festival

By Bill Wimmer

After attending the Topeka Festival for the first time, I approached Butch Berman about doing an article from my perspective of the weekend, and he thought that I could easily transfer my usual feature on an individual to the festival, and he was right. I usually do a feature on a musician: or musicians who I feel are somewhat overlooked in the post-Ken Burns era, but it turned out that the festival is quite unsung itself. First of all, let me say that it is a nice, fairly short ride down to Topeka (it is less than 3 hours away from Lincoln, and only about 40 minutes from Kansas City).

It is a nice little capital city (the capital of Kansas) that is all but shut down for the Memorial Holiday, and it is very easy to make a late reservation at one of a few nice hotels that are located about five minutes from the Topeka Performing Arts Center (TPAC). The furthest I had to park from the music was across the street at no charge. Drinks and some food were available at the festival for a reasonable price. The music was, of course, all first-rate with headliners who rarely, if ever, play in these parts. The shows all started and stopped essentially on time and went off without a hitch, and for the whole weekend you kind of feel like you have the whole town to your-

self.

In short, almost everything about the festival runs so smoothly and is so easy to enjoy it is really striking how few people actually attend the shows. Let me put it this way - any time you can leave your hotel at seven minutes before a

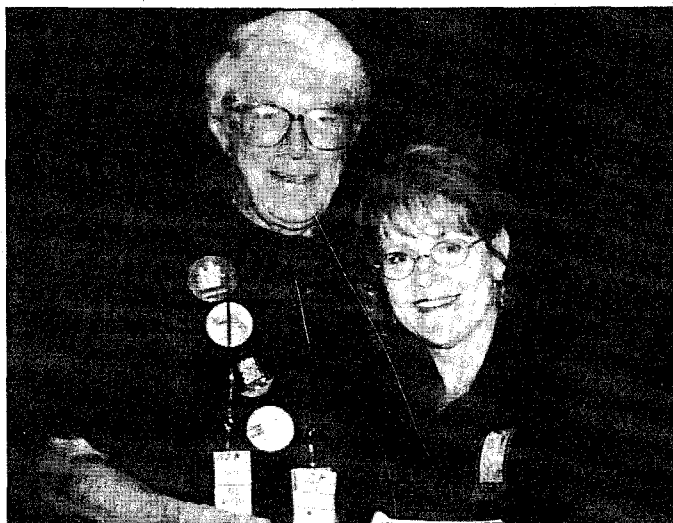
vidual tickets next year and see if you could get more than 150 people in an auditorium that holds 2600.

I have to admit that the hardest part about conveying my impression of the Topeka Jazz Festival is not trying to sound preachy when I stress how easy it could be for any of us to make it to the festival next year. I realize that having a decent turnout for an excellent weekend of jazz will make the hotels, streets, and auditorium more crowded than this year, but that's a chance I'm willing to take.

Next year's breakout schedule includes Bill Charlap, Peter Washington, Kenny Washington, Terrel Stafford, Wycliff Gordon, Ted Rosenthal

and The Clayton Brothers, along with many of the usual Kansas City and mostly West Coast established stars. I had a really wonderful pressure-free weekend, and when you consider the time, travel, cost and convenience of any other jazz festival trip compared to Topeka, it makes it extra special.

When Jim Monroe and his supporters put on a weekend like the Topeka Jazz Festival and so few fans take advantage of it, it makes the festival itself somewhat of an "Unsung Hero."



"Badge Man" Jim Monroe with T.P.A.C. Director of Marketing, Kate Hastings.

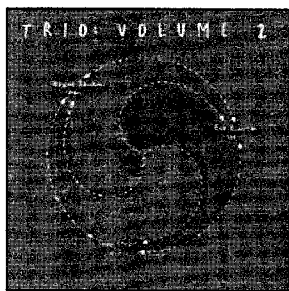
show, pull up, park out front and find a seat in the 5th row center to hear a set from The Ray Brown Trio on a Sunday afternoon 40 miles from Kansas City, a "jazz Mecca," something is amiss.

Admittedly, much of the festival publicity only emphasizes the 3 day passes with one or two-day prices listed in fine print, so there might be some thought that you have to buy a ticket for the whole day, when you can buy one for just an afternoon session, for example. I would like to see them offer indi-

Photo by Rich Hoover

Discorama

By Butch Berman



WAYNE HAWKINS *Trio: Volume 2* Hawkins Productions

While stuck in the middle of my *Prez sez* column – I felt compelled to listen to Wayne Hawkins new CD *Trio: Volume 2* for the third time in two days. Now, I'm so absorbed in this fresh new gem I had to write about it immediately. I guess the best thing I can say about his music, is how it inspires you to think, and in turn create from their creativity.

Semi-jokingly I refer to this powerful unit comprised of three of KC's top-tiered players Wayne on keyboards, Bob Bowman – THE solo bassman – and drummer Todd Strait – Mr. Perpetual motion of mind and body – the jazz version of Cream – (Clapton's UK supergroup from the '60s). Utilizing both brain and brawn to wrap you up in their taut, tight kaleidoscope of textures and tones. As I've stated before – it may be Wayne's world - but each individual shares melody duties and rhythmic comping equally and powerfully.

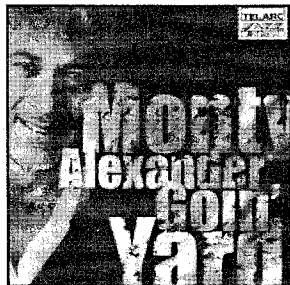
Co-producer Bill Crain gets the best bass and drums sound I've heard from a non-New York studio in a long time, as Bob and Todd play their asses off as enjoyably as I've ever heard them (which is a lot) – a most "lively"

live studio treat.

Also, as always Mr. Hawkins amazes me with his adept, yet sparse, but Tatum-like touch in his delivery.

A most clever and eclectic choice of tunes such as Bobby Troup's "Meaning of the Blues" or Rodgers & Hammerstein's "We Kiss in a Shadow" – none being overdone by anyone. Bowman and Hawkins both contribute two fine originals as well as a lovely tune from guitarist (and cover art artist) Danny Embrey with his "Ergo."

Trio: Volume 1 was great - 2 is even better - by the time *Volume 3* hits the stores the Wayne Hawkins Trio may be approaching their masterpiece.



MONTY ALEXANDER *Goin' Yard* Telarc

I'm really not sure where I first heard the mighty, yet mystical musical offerings of Jamaican-born jazz pianist Monty Alexander. While marveling to the exquisite new vibrations emitting from my sound system while debuting *Goin' Yard* - Monty Alexander's fine, fine, super fine Telarc release – I counted this new edition as number 15, including Pa-

cific Jazz's 36-year-old *Alexander the Great* and *Spunky*. Now, after hearing him featured three times at the grand Topeka Jazz Festival annual Memorial Weekend gig – only three hours from my house – has been a godsend. Anyhoo, no matter where I first discovered this very talented man – he's the total package. Piano virtuoso, singer, and storyteller...his live performances are truly enchanting.

Thus – *Goin' Yard*, recorded live at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, is almost the next best thing to capturing his mesmerizing show-stopping adventure in the flesh. Always reminding you of his heritage, yet a bebop element exists, maybe a little rock 'n' roll, and yes – even cabaret akin to Tin Pan Alley, are all blended, stirred, and served with a twist...of love - regardless of what loyal group of players he's recording or gigging with, all take you to the zone with a flourish.

This CD is no exception. An eclectic mix of Bob Marley ("King Tubby Meets the Rockers Uptown"); Jamaican folk tunes ("Day-O"); and several new originals (many of which he's playing on tour now) that all smolder 'n' cook. A reggae version of "Exodus" is an epic journey within itself.

Bravo again, Monty – always awaiting your next sterling performance, whether it be live or CD. Treat yourself to this fine piece of work with *Goin' Yard* and try to catch him live – one of the best!

Joe Henderson

By Bill Wimmer

The jazz world is mourning the passing of Joe Henderson, who died of heart failure in San Francisco on June 30, at age of 64. Henderson, one of the most individual saxophonists in jazz, hadn't performed since last year.

Joe Henderson was born in Lima, Ohio on April 24, 1937, and grew up musically in Detroit, where he attended college and started to hook up with some of the musical giants of the Detroit scene like Donald Byrd, Yusef Lateef, and others.

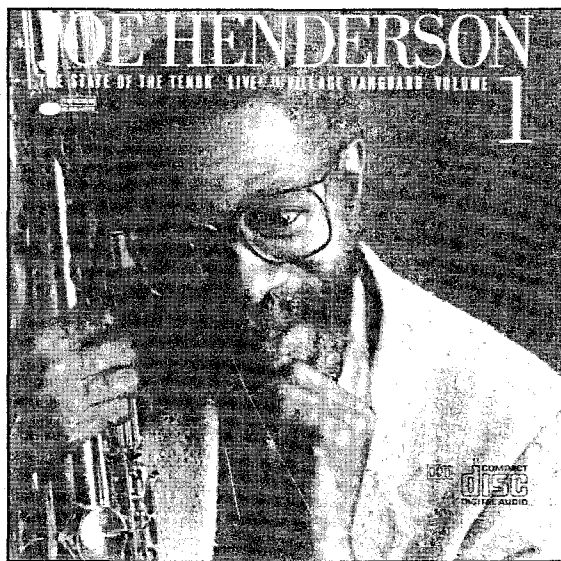
Joe started playing gigs in the late '50s before a two-year stint with the Army. In 1962 Henderson burst onto the New York scene, working with trumpeter Kenny Dorham and making some memorable recordings as well under his own name for the Blue Note label.

Joe Henderson, along with Wayne Shorter, was one of the most original saxophonists to come out of the post-Coltrane era. His tone, concept, feel, and ability to summon a virtual history of the music (past, present, and future) always made whatever piece of music he touched something that really touches you. It is almost impossible to describe the emotional way Henderson could play a phrase, so I urge you only to go out and buy some of his music.

I also urge the critics to stop ignoring the fact that Javon Jackson is a Henderson clone, but I won't get into the critics or The Associ-

ated Press who likened his lyrical playing to that of "the legendary Stan Getz."

Page One, Henderson's initial Blue Note release, is quite simply one of the greatest Blue Notes of all



time, and one I always recommend to anyone who doesn't own it. Any of the early Blue Note recordings are excellent and he also shines on such classics as Lee Morgan's *The Sidewinder*, Horace Silver's *Song For My Father*, Grant Green's *Solid* and McCoy Tyner's *The Real McCoy*.

Henderson played with Horace Silver from 1964-1966 and another two years with Herbie Hancock starting in 1969. It was about this time that Joe started a 10 year association with Milestone Records, and he moved to San Francisco in 1972. In the middle '80s, there was great critical acclaim for his trio records on Blue Note and the one on Red Records out of Italy.

Stripped down to the backing of Charlie Haden or Ron Carter on bass and Al Foster at the drums, these records brought renewed respect for Henderson's improvisations and his originality.

In 1991, Henderson released *Lush Life: The Music Of Billy Strayhorn* for Verve Records and it led to the greatest period of popularity of Henderson's career. He followed this up with tributes to Miles Davis on *So Near, So Far* and Jobim on *Double Rainbow*. All three titles won Grammy's and sold incredibly well for jazz albums, and in 1996, *Joe Henderson Big Band* kept that Grammy streak alive.

Henderson also appeared on some other excellent dates over the last few years with such artists as Donald Brown and Mulgrew Miller, with whom he recorded the fantastic record *Countdown*, on the Landmark label. This record features Miller on piano, along with Ron Carter and the powerhouse drumming of Tony Williams and is a great example of Henderson's playing.

Trust your ears, Joe Henderson was a true jazz original who blessed us with many years of beauty, heart and love in his music and all the world should regret the loss of a great American artist.

Jazz on the radio

By Dave Hughes

Jazz on Nebraska Public Radio

NPRN, the Nebraska Public Radio Network, KUCV at 90.9 FM in Lincoln and at other frequencies around the state (except Omaha), is making some changes to its Friday and Saturday night jazz lineups.

Starting August 10th at 10 p.m. (soon to be 10:30 pm in October) Graham House will bring you "Round Midnight," a bit earlier in the evening than it used to be. During most of the rest of August, the program will feature highlights from this year's Playboy Jazz Festival. Then, on August 31st and September 7th, you can hear highlights from this year's Chicago Jazz Festival. Also on August 10th, NPRN will be adding an overnight jazz service that will run from midnight Friday night until 6 a.m. Saturday morning as part of the networks move to broadcasting 24 hours a day.

On Saturday nights Don Gill will still host "Big Band Spotlight" at 8 p.m. and Marian McPartland will still host "Piano Jazz" at 9 p.m., but starting on August 11th 10 p.m. is when the schedule gets tweaked a little. Dave Hughes will still mix up the blues, roots, Cajun, zydeco, reggae and world music for two hours on "Late in the Evening," but will do it starting one hour earlier at 10 p.m. However, on September 1 and 8, you can hear more highlights from the Chicago Jazz Festival.

Then at 12 midnight the overnight jazz service will run until 6 a.m. Sunday morning.

For a free copy of NPRN's program guide "Choice," call 472-2200, or 1-800-290-6850.

Jazz on KZUM

KZUM Community Radio, at 89.3

FM in Lincoln, offers jazz programs Monday-Thursday afternoons from 1 to 3 p.m. and some other days and times.

The weekday afternoon schedule now goes like this: on Mondays, Dave Hoffman hosts "Dave's Closet" from 1 to 3pm. Bruce Bero programs "Giant Steps," on Tuesdays. Randy Morse hosts "Som do Brasil" on Wednesdays; and on Thursdays, a new host, Robbin Cihal, has taken over for Butch Berman, with her show "Jammin' Jazz-Borderline Blues."

There are other jazz programs scattered throughout the schedule. On Mondays, "Dance Bands: When Melody was King" with Con Good airs from 8 to 10 a.m.; "Jazz Journey," hosted by jazz musician Bill Wimmer, runs from 10 a.m. to 12 noon; and "Hotter Than That" with Warren "Rude Dog" Rudolph goes from 8:30 to 10 p.m.

"NightTown," with Tom Ineck, continues to run from 8:30-10 p.m. on Thursdays.

On Friday mornings, Ed Rumbaugh starts off your day with "Plug in the Sun" from 6 to 8 a.m. This program features Ed's eclectic tastes in jazz and assorted world music. Then on Friday evenings, tune in for some western swing on the "KZUM Heyride" from 7:30 to 9 p.m. with long time host John Schmitz.

If you would like detailed information about the jazz programs on KZUM, or would like to receive a current copy of their program guide, give them a call at 402-474-5086.

Jazz and blues on KIOS

KIOS at 91.5 in Omaha has jazz (and some blues) every weekday from 1 p.m. until 3:30 pm.

On Mondays it's all blues as "Beale Street Caravan" starts off the day at 1 p.m., then at 2 p.m. is "Blues in the Afternoon" hosted by Mike Jacobs.

On Tuesdays, it's the "Brazilian Hour" at 1 p.m., followed by "Jazz in the Afternoon" with Chris Cooke from 2-3:30 p.m.

On Wednesdays at 1 p.m. it's "Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz," then 90 minutes of "Jazz in the Afternoon" hosted by Mike Jacobs.

On Thursdays, "One Night Stand" with host Chris Nielsen kicks off the afternoon of jazz at 1 p.m., followed by another "Jazz in the Afternoon" at 2 p.m. with Cooke.

On Fridays "Jazz From Studio 1" starts it off at 1 p.m., followed by even another "Jazz in the Afternoon" with Jacobs again that lasts until 3:30 p.m.

On Saturdays KIOS now airs NPR's "Jazz Profiles" at 8 p.m. followed by "Jazz Junction" with Rick Erben at 9 p.m. and "Last Call" with Cooke again at 11 p.m.

For a free copy of the KIOS program guide, give them a call at 402-557-2777 in Omaha.

Jazz on KVNO

KVNO at 90.7 in Omaha continues to have locally programmed jazz on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Jazz runs from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. on Fridays, and from 6 p.m. to 2 am on Saturdays, with hosts Jim Celer and Tom Besse. For more information about jazz programming on KVNO, call 402-559-5866.

Blues on KIWR

Rick Galusha programs "P.S. Blues" from 9am-12noon every Sunday on KIWR at 89.7 FM out of Council Bluffs.

Rock and roll patriarch visits Seattle

By Mark Dalton

Sam Phillips blew into Seattle's Experience Music Project with all the intensity and wonder of a biblical prophet. His appearance here was part of a month long celebration of Sun Records, the Memphis-based studio and record label started by Phillips, and the remarkable stable of performers he recorded, released and promoted in the 1950s which literally changed the sound of popular music around the world.

Many folks associate Phillips primarily with the discovery and nurturing of the young white singer, Elvis Presley, who had such a phenomenal impact on the spread of Rock 'n' Roll, but his part in the development and promotion of this revolutionary music went far beyond Elvis. A few of Phillips' other credits include "Rocket 88," a monster R&B hit for the teen-aged Ike Turner and his Kings of Rhythm in 1951, which some music historians credit with beginning the Rock 'n' Roll era. Recording a 40-year-old Arkansas dirt farmer known as Howlin' Wolf (also in 1951) and

thus launching the professional career of one of the greatest post-war bluesmen, is still considered by Phillips to be his greatest accomplishment - but he was really just getting rolling at the time.

The list of artists first brought to public attention through Sam Phillips' genius goes on and on - Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, Carl Perkins, certainly; but he also recorded many other blues greats - Little Milton, Roscoe Gordon, Rufus Thomas, Willie Nix, Junior Parker, Doctor Ross, and James Cotton, to name just a few. As a talent scout and "psychologist (as he called himself)," and as a record producer and engineer whose "Sun Records Sound" continues to influence every generation behind the board - Phillips' influence and accomplishments are literally immeasurable.

Experienced in person, Phillips has a presence that made these accomplishments seem like a natural outgrowth of who he is. With a massive

head of still-dark hair, a flowing beard, piercing eyes, and the sonorous, room-filling voice of a backwoods preacher - Phillips at 78 had the impact of an early 20th century cross between Moses and Robert E. Lee.

His talk was laced with self-deprecating humor, but he left no doubt about his place in American history - Phillips clearly saw himself as a man of vision, a man who did not hesitate to risk all he had in the pursuit and capture of the music and southern culture he loved, and was determined to bring to the world.

To Seattle's credit, the packed house at the EMP gave Sam Phillips the love and recognition he deserves as a true patriarch of what "Shake the Shack" deejay Leon Berman calls "Rock 'n' Roll Boogie Rhythm and Blues." Thanks are due to the EMP for bringing this wonderful man (accompanied by the great music historian and Elvis biographer, Peter Guralnick) to visit the Pacific Northwest!

Jazz in the venues

Compiled by Dave Hughes

Monday Night Big Band continues

The Monday Night Big Band is still playing every Monday night at P.O. Pears, 322 S. 9th St in Lincoln.

Every week features a different music director that leads the group in three sets from 7:30 to 10 p.m. Audience members are still encouraged to bring their own instruments and sit in with the band during the second and third sets. The cover

charge is still \$4, \$3 for students.

For more info, call 402-477-8008.

Thursday Night Jazz Series

Now on every Thursday night a much smaller group hits the stage at P.O. Pears from 7:30 until 10 p.m. With the success of the Monday Night Big Band series, Dean Haist and the folks at Arts Incorporated decided to give the smaller trios, quartets, and other groups that aren't as large as the Monday night group a night of their own. The cover charge is a buck more than Monday.

Jazz at the Oven

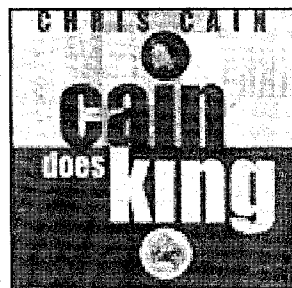
Jazz Duos continue on Sundays and Thursdays at the Oven, 201 8th St. in Lincoln. For more info, call 402-475-6118.

Jazz at The Five Reasons

They're taking the summer off at The Five Reasons Lounge in the Cornhusker Hotel in downtown Lincoln, but hopefully pianist John Carlini (sometimes with saxophonist Bill Wimmer) will be back playing jazz on Friday and Saturday nights this fall. Call 402-474-7474 to find out when they will resume.

Blues on Disc

By Rich Hoover



CHRIS CAIN
Cain does King
Blue Rock'it Records

Chris Cain has made the official tribute to his mentor/teacher/master Mr. B.B. King. Chris, who worked with B.B. for many years before fronting his own group, has done well on his own and has continuously carried the banner of B.B.'s style and philosophy as his standard. The selection of tunes is material from the '50s to the '70s with the focus on the workin' songs of B.B. - staying away from the signature tunes BB has generated over the years.

There are a dozen tunes on the CD that give a well rounded selection from B.B.'s arsenal of material.

If you know and enjoy B.B. King, or Chris Cain, or you just like the blues, you will like this CD.



DEBORAH COLEMAN
Livin' on Love
Blind Pig

Well, this gal is a breath of fresh air for the blues community. A good solid guitar player, an excellent expressive voice, and according to the cover photos, pretty, too. The group expresses a very contemporary groove, and has Billy Crawford on guitar, Debra Salyer on bass, Marty Binder on drums, and guest artist Jimmy Thackery doin' guitar on three cuts. The CD has eleven solid new tunes and is well produced. I think you should check out this rising star in the making.

Deborah is scheduled to appear at Lincoln's July Jamm 2001 on July 28th at 11 a.m. followed by Jimmy Thackery at 1 p.m.

Blues Corner

By Rich Hoover

Here we are midstream in the summer festival season and one of the better ones is right here in Lincoln.

It's July Jamm Thursday July 26th thru Saturday the 28th. It's a family and friend oriented kind of fun, with plenty of music - mainly blues - showing local, regional, and national acts of the highest caliber. Thursday's headliners are Dave Hole, followed by A. J. Croce. Friday heats up with headliners The Bel Airs and then "bluesblaster" E. C. Scott. Then, on Saturday it's HOT, HOT, HOT starting at 11 a.m. with Deborah Coleman; 1 p.m. it's Jimmy Thackery; 3 p.m. Kelly Hunt; 5 p.m. Bernard Allison; 7 p.m. Chubby Carrier; 9 p.m. Coco Montoya; than at 11 p.m. Brave Combo will close the show. And, it will be a SHOW!

Perfect jazz sabbatical

By Dan Demuth

May I suggest some thoughts on designing the perfect jazz sabbatical? The setting would be a beautifully restored art deco performing arts center, one that reflects the time when the music you're hearing was being nurtured in its adolescent stage. Easy access with minimal traffic and free close by parking. A helpful and knowledgeable staff at every turn. Performances from mid-morning to (perhaps) midnight.

Come and go as you please with food and libations available throughout the day. A breakfast and an evening food and cocktail function attended by many

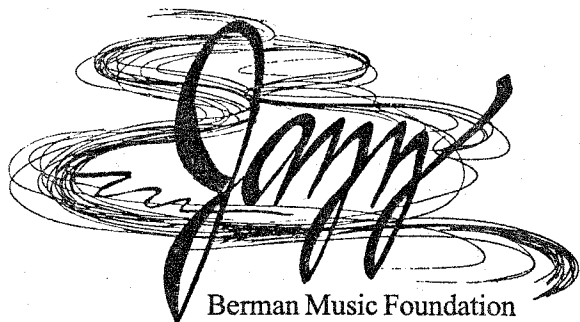
of the performing artists. Mingle, meet and take with them, creating a feeling of being a participant and not a remote observer. Close by hotels with very reasonable rates, and yes, the performers (will be) staying there also.

Who to see? How about the Ray Brown Trio, or Monty Alexander's trio, Jeff Hamilton, Gerald Wiggins, Ken Peplowski, Frank Capp, Karrin Allyson, Bob Kindred, Jay Leonhart...space does not allow, etc. Then mix and match some various artists for some unique ensembles.

Put all of this in a slow paced Mid-

western city a short flight or a comfortable day's drive from the Springs, and you have the Topeka Jazz Festival, every Memorial Day Weekend for three days.

Editor's Note: This article was reprinted from Pikes Peak JASS Notes, a jazz newsletter published by the Pikes Peak Jazz and Swing Society, a Colorado Springs area jazz society. Former Lincolnite Dan Demuth and his wife Patti, who now live in Colorado Springs, are now members of this group. For more information about PPJASS, you can reach them at PO Box 6802, Colorado Springs, CO 80934.



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Eldar's Jazz in June Sideman Shine



Photo by Rich Hoover

Bassist Gerald Spaits studies a score



Photo by Rich Hoover

Todd Strait swings mightily on the skins

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