



Photos by Tom Ineck



Clarinetist Joe Genovesi and pianist Dan Cerveny at Brewsky's Aug. 19.

Capital Jazz Society in new home

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—The Capital Jazz Society recently found a new home for its twice-weekly gigs. After nearly nine years at P.O. Pears bar and grill in downtown Lincoln, the performances have moved to the lower level of Brewsky's Food and Spirits, at 201 N. Eighth St. in the Historic Haymarket District.

That change of venue came as a relief to CJS executive director Dean Haist, who had been sweating bullets since longtime P.O. Pears owner Bob Jergensen suddenly announced he was closing the doors in March, after unsuccessful attempts to sell the business.

"We had relatively short notice," Haist said. "It was good timing for us, in a way, because we were coming up on a break and we were able to finish what we had scheduled."

Having a few months "off" also gave CJS a chance to rethink its Monday big band and Thursday small group concert series. In an ironic twist, the former dearth of jazz venues that first inspired the CJS bookings had become somewhat of a deluge, with several area restaurants now offering live jazz at no cover charge. Students in Tom Larson's jazz history class at the

University of Nebraska-Lincoln—always a reliable audience—suddenly had more options and the CJS had more competition. The Tuesday night Jazz in June concert series also had reduced the number of listeners who turned out for Monday and Thursday performances.

As a result, the CJS has restruc-

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The Capital City Dixieland Preservation Society Jazz Band packs them in at Brewsky's Jazz Undergrand on Aug. 19.

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*Special Report***Berman foundation had busy summer**By *Tony Rager*

LINCOLN, Neb.—The **Berman Music Foundation** has been busy over the summer.

Jazz in June was a wonderful tribute to Butch. Special thanks to Martha Florence and Doug Campbell for making each Jazz in June show an event honoring Butch and his contributions to the Lincoln music scene. We look forward to working with Jazz in June in the future.

Grace and I have been busy working on other various projects and reviewing several grant requests.

In keeping with our theme to promote music by focusing on young people, we issued a grant to the **North-east Family Center** in Lincoln to promote their **Academy of Rock** program. Our grant allowed the group to purchase two acoustic guitars and other equipment. The center fosters youth development with the goal of keeping kids from engaging in unhealthy behaviors. They work with Lincoln's most diverse and low-income households.

We have also awarded a grant to the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Music** to support two very exciting projects in 2009.

The first project is the **Honor Jazz Weekend**, a unique jazz experience for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. The festival is designed to give outstanding musicians a comprehensive playing and learning experience. Festival participants are chosen through a recorded audition (tape or CD). Students attending the festival will have the opportunity to be involved in small jazz combos, as well as a large jazz ensemble. Students will also participate in master classes with UNL faculty and featured guests learn about jazz history, composition, and improvisation. The

Honor Jazz Weekend is currently underwritten by the UNL School of Music. The featured guest artist for 2009—vibraphonist Stefon Harris—is sponsored by the Lied Center for the Performing Arts.

The Berman Music Foundation will underwrite the costs for a new innovation in this 2009 program, a music educator training session for high school music teachers in the region. Up to five music educators will be invited to the UNL Honor Jazz Weekend as Berman Jazz Fellows. Their workshop experiences will include sessions by UNL School of Music faculty and Stefon Harris on jazz pedagogy, distinctive repertoire for high school jazz programs, developing jazz combos in the high school setting, and strategies for the teaching of jazz composition. Fellows will be in residence from Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon. The Berman fellowship will underwrite all lodging, meals, round trip mileage to the UNL campus, and instructional experiences and materials.

The second project is the **UNL Summer Jazz Camp** for high school music students. The camp will include a week of instruction and jazz performance, with special emphasis on small-group performance and jazz composition. The workshop faculty will include outstanding performers and teachers—from UNL and elsewhere—offering personal instruction in improvisation, combos, big band, jazz composition, history and theory, with master classes and ensembles tailored to the needs and abilities of each student. Each evening, students and faculty will present concerts and jam sessions offering students of all levels the chance to perform and grow in improvisational, small group,

and ensemble playing. Enrollment will be limited to 40 students.

The plan is to produce the jazz camp in June so that faculty can find interesting ways to partner with the Jazz in June concert series. Possibilities include inviting that week's Jazz in June artist to present a master class or to coach at the camp.

Recently, we awarded a grant to the **Lincoln Arts Council** to sponsor the entertainment at the **Lincoln Arts Festival** scheduled for Sept. 27-28 at Southpointe Pavilion. The festival attracts nearly 12,000 patrons and artists and is highlighted by some of Lincoln's finest musicians.

Grace has been working with various education groups to donate some of the foundation's musical instruments. BMF will continue our relationship with **KZUM Community Radio** by underwriting several jazz and blues shows. We have also continued our sponsorship of the **Friends of Lied** and we continue to review grant requests and hope to work with many organizations and institutions in the Lincoln area.

Finally, I know that many Berman Music Foundation supporters have asked about the status of the foundation's music collection. We are finalizing the cataloging of the library and have had discussions with educational institutions toward our goal of loaning the collection to an institution that is better able to house the materials and share them with the public. This is an ongoing process that we hope to finish in the next few months.

May the music never end.

Tony Rager

Trustee

Berman Music Foundation

Arts Inc. opens new offices in historic downtown space

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—The last few months have been a little hectic for Dean Haist.

While scrambling to find a new venue for the Capital Jazz Society's live performances, he also was faced with the task of finding new offices for Arts Incorporated, the arts management and promotion business of which he is president.

Arts Inc. recently threw an open house celebration at its new digs on the ground floor of 315 S. Ninth St., in the Peanut Butter Factory building. With more than 2,000 square feet of office space for the staff of a dozen, a reception area, conference room and a street-side downtown location that raises the organization's visibility, Haist is pleased, but weary.

"Everything kind of lined up at the same time, but it made for a difficult spring," Haist said with typical understatement. After more than a decade in upstairs quarters at 216 N. 11th St., Arts Inc. suddenly was asked to find a new home to make way for planned renovations in that building.

"We thought we were going to be OK there until the end of 2009, which is what some of the other tenants had been led to believe," Haist said, but he already was checking out spaces for the eventual move.

He was introduced to developers Will and Robert Scott, which led him to the historic factory building. The space need some major work, and Haist had decided it against it until he got an e-mail



Dean Haist, president of Arts Incorporated, with "motivation officer" Jose perched on his left shoulder

message from his landlord saying Arts Inc. had to be out by the end of July.

"I got right on the phone and we worked out a lease for this space and got the keys and got in here and started painting. I had a Tom Sawyer party or two, where I invited all my friends and we ended up with close to 25 gallons of paint and five cases of beer, which is all I could afford to pay them."

Arts Inc. made the move in June. After sorting and reorganizing many years' worth of files, file cabinets and furniture, Haist and his staff have settled in to their new home, with a five-year lease and an option for five more.

The area is ripe for restoration and development and the downtown location is perfect for its proximity to the Historic Haymarket area and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln city campus, he said.

"I'm hoping I won't ever have to move again."



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Trustee: Tony Rager

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

Courtesy Photo

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tured its concert season to conform more closely to the UNL school year, plus a few dates for students attending the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra's summer jazz camp.

"Scaling back a little bit is going to be good for us, and I don't think it's going to hurt the jazz scene," Haist said. "There are more opportunities than there have ever been in Lincoln to hear jazz now."

Brian Kitten, co-owner of Brewsky's sports bars in Lincoln and Omaha, was open to the idea of housing CJS events in the basement of the old building, which previously had been underutilized, mostly for private parties. Unofficially referred to as Brewsky's Jazz Underground, the new space is well-suited for live jazz, with a low, wood-beamed ceiling, exposed brick, excellent acoustics, subtle lighting, good sight lines to the stage and seating for about 110. Brewsky's also has superb food and drink menus.

"It's a very comfortable venue," Haist agreed. "I can't say enough good things about the owner and the management there and the folks we've been working with. They have just bent over backwards. They helped financially with some of the things we needed to do to move there." Brewsky's purchased the piano from P.O. Pears and a public address system.

A dry run in July revealed several needed improvements, but Brewsky's has been eager to help make the space more compatible for the presentation of live music, Haist said. He hopes to have streetscape signage soon, to draw passersby who are unaware of Brewsky's new jazz policy. Curbside parking often is a problem in the popular Haymarket, but there is almost always ample space in nearby garages and lots.

The Monday Night Big Band



Photos by Tom Ineck

Drummer Joey Gulizia, bassist Andy Hall, trombonist Bryant Scott, trumpeter Mac McCune and clarinetist Joe Genovesi at Brewsky's.



Trumpeter John Mills (right) sits in with the band.

officially opened the Brewsky's jazz venue on July 21, followed by the Thursday Night Jazz Series on July 24. A special performance by the Capital City Dixieland Preservation Society Jazz Band drew a standing room-only crowd on Aug. 19 (see the review below).

Monday night performances feature a full 17-piece big band. Students and audience members are urged to bring their instruments and sit in with the band. Haist said the number of younger musicians who turn out for jazz events citywide is encouraging.

"I see a lot of UNL musicians down at Monday Night Big Band," he said. "I see more musicians in the community that are doing a variety of things. They've stuck around or are going to graduate school and are active and involved."

The Capital Jazz Society re-

sumed a regular schedule of Monday and Thursday performances on Sept. 8. The following dates have been scheduled, with more to be added later.

Sept. 11, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Ed Love Group

Sept. 15, Monday Night Big Band, Jeff Patton, conductor

Sept. 18, Thursday Night Jazz Series, John Carlini Group

Sept. 22, Monday Night Big Band, Dean Haist, conductor

Sept. 25, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Group Sax

Sept. 29, Monday Night Big Band, Marc LaChance, conductor

Oct. 2, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Peter Bouffard Group

Oct. 9, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Scott Vicroy Group

Oct. 16, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Bob Krueger Group

Nov. 6, Thursday Night Jazz Series, Darryl White Group

All performance at Brewsky's are from 7:30-10 p.m. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for students (with valid I.D.) or \$3 if you bring your instrument and sit in with the band on Mondays. Full food and beverage service is available.

Performance Review

Trad jazz draws SRO crowd to Brewsky's

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Jazz styles run the gamut from traditional New Orleans polyphony to avant-garde cacophony, setting lines of demarcation across the range of jazz evolution in its 100-year history. So, audiences can seem a little partial depending on their own particular preference.

Demographically, the most avid fans of the Crescent City's flag-waving, good-time sounds tend to be older. Appropriately, there was an abundance of white-haired jazz devotees in attendance on the evening of Aug. 19, when the Capital City Dixieland Preservation Society Jazz Band delivered a stirring performance at the so-called Brewsky's Jazz Underground, Lincoln's latest jazz venue.

For those of us who appreciate good music of any style, it was a no-brainer. Some of the area's best musicians were on hand. The acoustics and ambiance in the 110-seat, lower-level room are well-suited for live performances, and the standing room-only audience was creating some very positive energy. The result was a memorable evening for everyone.

Some of the players have been around as long as the audience members. Lincoln trumpeter Mac McCune and Omaha clarinetist Joe Genovesi are beloved area musicians who have established their well-deserved reputations over many decades of one-nighters and extended lounge engagements. Also on the front line was young trombonist Bryant Scott, a former Lincoln resident now living in Chicago. The veteran rhythm section was simply the cream of the crop: Dan Cerveny of Omaha on piano; Andy Hall of Lincoln on bass; and Joey Gulizia of Omaha on drums.

There were few surprises in the



Photos by Tom Ineck

Capital City Dixieland Preservation Society Jazz Band at Brewsky's Aug. 19.



Mac McCune uses his hand as a mute.

band's repertoire, which featured such evergreens as "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home," "Up the Lazy River," "St. James Infirmary," and "I Found a New Baby." The joy was in hearing like-minded musicians conjure up the classic New Orleans rhythms and instrumental interplay, with plenty of space for solo statements, especially from McCune, Genovesi and Scott.

Genovesi's rousing clarinet work on "Bill Bailey" defined the very essence of the New Orleans sound. "Up the Lazy River" was taken at a mournful tempo evocative of... well, a lazy river. McCune's muted trumpet statement on "St. James Infirmary" was a soulful introduction, later amplified by Scott's bluesy trombone solo.

After a break in the action, the band returned to the stage with an additional trumpeter, John Mills. The standards kept coming, with "Basin St. Blues," "Do You Know What it Means (to Miss New Orleans)?" "Ain't Misbehavin'" and "Things Ain't What They Used to Be." "Sweet Georgia Brown" was a fitting finale.

On "Do You Know What It Means," McCune took a brilliant, imaginative solo that quoted "Rhapsody in Blue." The sly trumpeter always has a few tricks up his sleeve, and his technique is never less than sterling.

The Capital Jazz Society plans to book the Dixielanders several times a year. As long as the band's aging fans can still make it to the venue, it promises to remain a popular event.

Festival Review

Chicago Jazz Fest celebrates 30 years

By Tom Ineck

CHICAGO, Ill.—Twenty years is a long time between trips to Chicago, and once again it took the Chicago Jazz Festival to get me headed north to the Windy City.

This year's 30th annual event was Aug. 28-31, with a special opening-night performance by Sonny Rollins and a closing-night finale by Ornette Coleman.

In between, a typically diverse array of jazz artists took the Petrillo Music Shell stage in Grant Park. Afternoon performances were scheduled at a smaller stage on nearby Jackson Street.

The city-sponsored jazz fest has always prided itself on a schedule that alternates mainstream jazz with the avant-garde. The lineup in 1988 also included Sonny Rollins and Ornette Coleman, in addition to Herbie Hancock, the Sun Ra Arkestra, Charlie Haden and his Liberation Orchestra, native sons—all saxophonists—Clifford Jordan, Johnny Griffin, Von Freeman and Ira Sullivan, and native daughter pianist Dorothy Donegan, among many others.

This year, the headliners ranged in age from the young East Indian jazz fusion keyboardist Vijay Iyer to the 90-year-old big band leader Gerald Wilson, whose performance featured a guest appearance by guitarist Kenny Burrell. Singer Dee Dee Bridgewater paid tribute to the late Betty Carter, and the Eddie Palmieri Latin Jazz Band stirred up a hot salsa of dance numbers. Trumpeter Dave Douglas paid respectful and aptly adventurous homage to the late Lester Bowie, who moved to Chicago in the mid-1960s and later founded the cutting-edge Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) and the Art Ensemble of Chicago.



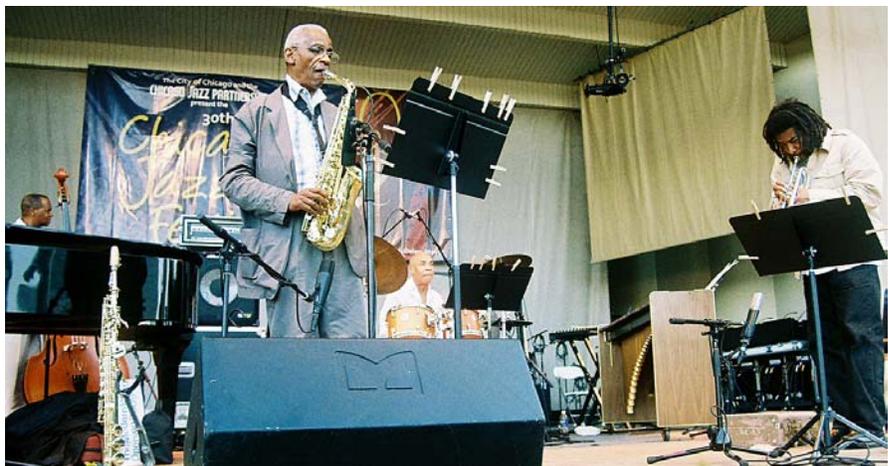
Photos by Tom Ineck

The Chicago skyline glows as a crowd gathers at the Petrillo Bandshell in Grant Park for an evening performance at the 2008 Chicago Jazz Festival.

One of the most vital and enduring traditions of the jazz fest is its commitment to new compositions. With help from the Chicago Jazz Partnership, the festival this year commissioned original works by four artists, including Saturday night headliners Iyer, Douglas and Wilson. The fourth was the 5 p.m. open-

ing-day "Tribute to Captain Walter Dyett," in honor of the late educator who served as the mentor for so many of the city's great jazz artists.

Having just arrived at my hotel room about the time that performance was in progress, I didn't arrive at the festival site until 6 p.m., just in time for



Members of the AACM are (from left) Michael Logan, Roscoe Mitchell, Thurman Barker and Wadada Leo Smith.



AACM pianist Amina Claudine Myers

another tribute. This one recognized the indisputable influence of the AACM and featured saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell, trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith, pianist Amina Claudine Myers, bassist Michael Logan and drummer Thurman Barker, who organized the quintet for this special appearance.

The quintet's style is best summed up in one word—intense. Myers attacked the keyboard with ferocious, percussive phrases. Mitchell, 68, belied his age with long alto sax solos that employ rotary breathing to an amazing degree.

Trumpeter Smith and saxophonist Mitchell created a formidable front line, often playing in unison on long, through-written pieces, and then alternating lines in classic jazz dialogue.

Logan and Barker seldom played the time-keeping role of the traditional rhythm section. Instead, they wove intricate patterns around the others, de-

fining the essence of group improvisation. Barker also doubled on marimba to great effect, lending an organic element to the overall sound. He combined that instrument, cymbals and drums in a moving piece he wrote for the late AACM drummer Steve McCall (1933-1989). Mitchell, in turn, took up the soprano sax to pay homage to late AACM bassist Malachi Favors (1927-2004).

The AACM tribute band eschewed stage banter, not even introducing the pieces by name, preferring to let the music speak for itself. It did, profoundly.



Dee Dee Bridgewater wails as drummer Winard Harper adds emphasis.

Like her mentor Betty Carter (1930-1998), Dee Dee Bridgewater always brings style and drama to her performances, both visually and musically. Possessing a virtuosic vocal range and an irresistible personality, she commands the stage and rivets the audience's attention. With a program devoted to Carter and a rhythm section comprised of Carter veterans, she delivered a spectacular concert.

Accompanying Bridgewater were pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Ira Coleman and drummer Winard Harper, all of whom were among the many young musicians who Carter famously hand-picked and nurtured during her career. The singer had herself been a close friend and student of Carter's, giving the tribute concert a sense of authenticity.

Among the early highlights was a very fast rendition of "What a Little Moonlight Can Do" and a scat-singing interlude during "There Is No Greater Love" in which Bridgewater mimicked a muted trumpet solo with unfettered glee. A resident of France for many years, she sang the standard "The Good Life (La Dolce Vita)" with the original French lyrics using Carter's arrangement. "Cherokee" had Bridgewater and Miller trading phrases in dazzling style. The band slowed to a ballad tempo for a rendition of "Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most."

Bridgewater related her final phone conversation with Carter and her efforts to win the rights for the only "authorized" tribute show to her mentor. That served as an introduction to her take on Carter's most idiosyncratic and devilishly difficult number, the stop-and-start, elastic "Tight." After a couple of miscues, she sailed into the heart of the song, with the band admirably keeping pace, and confidently added the sequel, "Mr. Gentleman."

Finally, Bridgewater turned her attention to another gifted singer and



Pianist Mulgrew Miller interacts with Dee Dee Bridgewater.

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iconoclast, Nina Simone (1933-2003). Her powerful rendition of Simone's classic "Four Women" led to a call to all women of color—"Yes, we can change!"—and a plea to vote for Barack Obama. It would not be the last time during the festival that an artist would endorse the Democratic candidate for president.

But there were no overt political messages in the infectious music of the evening's closing act, the Eddie Palmieri Latin Jazz Band. Holding court from the piano bench, Palmieri displayed a perpetual glowing smile, evidence of his great love for this music and for Chicago.

Palmieri's current octet boasts the stellar front line of trumpeter Brian Lynch, tenor saxophonist Donald Harrison and trombonist Conrad Herwig, plus Luques Curtis on bass, Jose Claussell on timbales, Vicente "Little Johnny" Rivero on congas and Orlando Vega on bongos and cowbell. The mood was light and the playing was top-notch as they whipped through an hour-long set of rhythmic dance tunes and ballads, ending with the smoking, crowd-pleasing favorite, "Azucar," with somewhat unsteady vocals by the 71-year-old Palmieri.

Hoping to catch legendary guitarist Kenny Burrell fronting a rhythm section of Chicago's finest at the Jazz on



The Eddie Palmieri Latin Jazz Band, with the front line of saxophonist Donald Harrison, trumpeter Brian Lynch and trombonist Conrad Herwig.

Jackson stage, I hustled over to the festival grounds around 3:30 p.m. Saturday, only to find that Burrell had been replaced by trumpeter Brian Lynch. But, after witnessing his playing prowess with Palmieri the previous night, I was delighted to see him in a different format, with excellent accompaniment from pianist Willie Pickens, bassist Larry Gray and drummer Joel Spencer. After a half-hour in the sun-baked street, snapping photos in 90-degree heat, I fled for a cooling respite to the nearby banks of Lake Michigan, a welcome change of scenery for weary festival-goers.

The 5 p.m. performance at Petrillo



Eddie Palmieri sings as bassist Luques Curtis plays.

Music Shell was the sextet of trumpeter Pharez Whitted, a native of Columbus, Ohio, who now directs the jazz studies program at Chicago State University. He was joined by Edwin Bayard on tenor sax, Bobby Broom on guitar, Ron Perrillo on piano, Dennis Carroll on bass and Kobie Watkins on drums. The group will release its debut CD next year, good news for those of us who think Whitted is deserving of more recognition. His style is akin to Freddie Hubbard's. Indeed, the trumpeter performed two Hubbard tunes, the funky "Mr. Clean" and the uptempo "Bird-like."

Commissioned to write a piece for the festival, pianist Vijay Iyer delivered "Far From Over," a seven-part suite



Trumpeter Pharez Whitted is joined by pianist Ron Perrillo, bassist Dennis Carroll, drummer Kobie Watkins and guitarist Bobby Broom.



Pianist Vijay Iyer, bassist Stephan Crump and trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire

inspired by the police shooting of Sean Bell in New York City and devoted to the potential change promised by a Barack Obama presidency. The title, Iyer noted, acknowledges that much work lies ahead in improving the lives of Americans at home and the status of the United States abroad.

The performance also marked the debut appearance of Iyer's formidable quintet, which prominently featured guitarist Prasanna, whose style draws on the keening tone and leaping scales of the sitar. The band also includes trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire, who won the 2007 Thelonious Monk Competition,

bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Marcus Gilmore, the grandson of legendary bop drummer Roy Haynes.

Melding many musical influences, Iyer and company performed the movements of the suite—"Far From Over," "Optimism," "Out of the Tunnel," "Passage," "Actions Speak..." "Helix," and



Guitarist Prasanna

"Good on the Ground"—with assurance and technical proficiency, displaying stylistic elements of rock, jazz, folk and world music in a rhythmically complex tapestry of sound.

Douglas and his Brass Ecstasy ensemble contributed "Chicago Calling: Bowie, Barack and Brass," another outspoken, political call to action. Of course, the band's name is a reference to Bowie's ground-breaking, mid-'80s outfit, Brass Fantasy. Douglas carries on—and extends—that tradition with help from Vincent Chancey on french horn, Luis Bonilla on trombone, Marcus Rojas on tuba and Ben Perowsky on drums.

The unusual format of four brass instruments and drums created beautiful harmonies and dynamics running the full range from Douglas' astounding trumpet flights to the lower regions of Rojas' tuba. Perowsky broadened his own palette by employing tuned bells and a second bass drum set up behind him, in addition to a standard drum kit. For emphasis, he would occasionally take up a mallet and pound the bass drum, creating a thunderous effect when combined with tuba.

The brass-heavy nature of the ensemble also allowed Brass Ecstasy to approximate the polyphony of traditional New Orleans bands without sounding stodgy or old-fashioned. The trumpet soared, the trombone growled and the drums marched, but, as always, Douglas maintained an imaginative, progressive approach to the music.

In case anyone failed to get the political message of the suite, Douglas announced that it was dedicated to Nov. 4 (Election Day) and shouted "Yes, we can!" a sentiment echoed by many in the audience.

Finally, Douglas offered a tune specifically dedicated to Bowie that he wrote before the commissioned suite. Entitled "Glad to Meet You," it was performed as a soulful, slow-drag that



Trumpeter Dave Douglas with Marcus Rojas on tuba, Ben Perowsky on drums, Vincent Chancey on french horn and Luis Bonilla on trombone

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had Douglas exhibiting some of the lip effects and breathing for which Bowie and Louis Armstrong are known.

The evening's closer was a joyous affair by the age-defying, nonagenarian big band leader Gerald Wilson. His commissioned piece was a long, somewhat disjointed suite called "Chicago Is." Again and again, it praised Chicago as "a beautiful place to be," citing its windy reputation, its history as a transportation hub, its blues roots and its many sports venues and sports fans.

Noting his tenure with Jimmie Lunceford and Count Basie, Wilson began with a tune he wrote for Basie in the late 1940s. An animated conductor, Wilson energetically led the band through the swinger, which included excellent solos by Winston Byrd on trumpet, Yvette Devereaux on violin, and Louie Spears on bass.

On several tunes, his 18-piece, Los Angeles-based orchestra was augmented by legendary guitarist Kenny Burrell. He made his entrance on "Theme for Monterey: Romance," part of a suite commissioned by the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1997. Wilson humorously dedicated it to lovers of all kinds, proceeding to number all the possible combinations. Burrell also was featured on "Viva Tirado," an bluesy Latin tune from the recent collaboration between Wilson and the guitarist. Sans Burrell, the band followed up with "Triple Chase," an old flag-waving favorite.

Pianist Brian O'Rourke, who has been with Wilson for 15 years, performed the introduction to "Chicago Is." Burrell returned to deliver the very romantic melody, accompanied by powerful brass voicing, and an outstanding guitar solo. "Blues Triangle" and "Blowing in the Windy City" brought the suite to its conclusion, after which festival officials wheeled a giant cake to the stage's edge and sang "Happy Birthday" to the grateful bandleader, who



Photos by Tom Ineck

Bandleader Gerald Wilson, 90, conducts the orchestra.



Guitarist Kenny Burrell and violinist Yvette Devereaux

was born Sept. 4, 1918. A few days early, it was nevertheless a fitting end to an amazing day of music.

In keeping with the festival's pledge to celebrate jazz in all its diverse forms, the final evening was arguably the most adventurous of all, beginning with the iconoclastic Instant Compos-

ers Pool Orchestra, a Dutch outfit with roots in the early 1960s, when pianist Misha Mengelberg coined the term "instant composition," as opposed to the much-maligned concept of "free improvisation."

Like Chicago's AACM, the ICP has had rotating personnel but still includes Mengelberg and original drummer Han Bennink. The current 10-piece ensemble also includes Ab Baars, Tobias Delius and Michael Moore on clarinets and saxophones, Thomas Heberer on trumpet, Wolter Wierbos on trombone and a string sections comprised of Mary Oliver on violin and viola, Tristan Honsinger on cello and Ernst Glerum on bass. Together, they create a very unique sound, often beginning with cacophonous interplay that somehow evolves into a familiar jazz standard. Indeed, in its 35-year recording history, the ICP has covered many tunes by Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk and Herbie Nichols, but never in a way that could be considered conventional



8 Bold Souls, led by Edward Wilkerson Jr. (far right) on saxophone

or predictable. Viva le difference!

A musical mainstay in Chicago since 1985, the loose-knit 8 Bold Souls have never received the recognition they deserve for their genre-leaping compositions and extraordinary group interplay. With only four recordings in the last 20 years—most recently in 2000—it was a rare treat to hear them live.

The octet is led by multi-reed specialist Edward Wilkerson Jr., the festival's 2008 Artist-in-Residence, and boasts some of the Windy City's most talented and innovative players—Mwata Bowden on reeds, Robert Griffin on trumpet, Isaiah Jackson on trombone, Aaron Dodd on tuba, Naomi Millender on cello, Harrison Bankhead on bass and Dushun Mosley on drums. The festival appearance also featured special guest vocalist Dee Alexander, herself an area favorite.

Wilkerson speculated that the “definable Chicago sound” is perhaps due to the city's wind, the cold weather or the smell of the stockyards. 8 Bold Souls undoubtedly are linked to Chicago's blues roots, but not in any conventional, 12-bar sense. The tune “Autumn of the Patriarch” was a modified tango.

Flaunting their versatility,



Dee Alexander



Ornette Coleman and his “Sound Grammar” quartet

Wilkerson moved easily from tenor sax to alto sax so clarinet to soprano sax, while Griffin took up both trumpet and flugelhorn, first alternating the two, then playing both simultaneously. Bowden doubled on baritone sax and clarinet.

Alexander joined the band for the gospel-tinged “I Can Fly,” and deftly scatted her way through the boppish “What the Heck,” displaying a broad range, both vocally and stylistically. A swaggering funk tune completed the set with Wilkerson on tenor. The four-horn front line, with additional heft from the tuba, created a brawny sound.

High anticipation notwithstanding, the average listener could not have been adequately prepared for Ornette Coleman's festival-closing set. The 78-year-old, free-jazz icon did not disappoint those who expected the unexpected. It began when Coleman's announced entrance was delayed by several minutes while the rest of his quartet stood waiting on stage. It soon became apparent that the band leader had misplaced his horn. Stage hands scurried until it was found and taken to him.

Coleman's most recent release, “Sound Grammar,” was his first in a decade and, as though in recognition that his music still is relevant, it won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize and inspired a tour by the “Sound Grammar” quartet, consisting of Coleman along with acoustic bassist Tony Falaga, electric bassist Al

MacDowell and drummer Denardo Coleman, the leader's son and longtime percussionist.

Never one for idle chit-chat, Coleman remained silent throughout the set, without a word of introduction for the tunes. He switched, seemingly at random, from alto sax to trumpet to violin, as the others followed his every whim. MacDowell was especially effective as he played his four-string Fender in the upper register, creating a dynamic contrast with Falaga's growling upright bass.

On a bluesy tune, the acoustic bass and drums kept things grounded as Coleman pitted his alto sax against the electric bass in counterpoint. The basses then joined in unison as an introduction to Coleman's solo statement. Falaga began another tune with bowed bass in a baroque style, while Coleman moved from violin to trumpet to alto sax against the classical pattern. Yet another tune was a folk ballad with a gorgeous bowed-bass melody that was abruptly interrupted by Coleman trumpet squeaks and blats and alto sax squawks.

As the set came to an end, fireworks went off over Lake Michigan, not for the festival but for a nearby ball game. Even so, it seemed a fitting end to a sonically explosive and stylistically kaleidoscopic festival.

Concert Review

Rollins, 78, shares wisdom through his horn

By Jesse Starita

CHICAGO, Ill.—On a tranquil late-August evening, 13,000 people gathered to hear an oracle proffer his wisdom. This offering—channeled through the soul and spirit of a jazz elder's saxophone—was intimate and engaging, rollicking and sincere. Perched below the city's imposing skyline, Sonny Rollins commenced the 2008 Chicago Jazz Festival with sustained swing, clarity and grace.

Emerging with a delicate walk, Rollins turned his back to the crowd to converse with his personnel. A quick order then ensued. Kobie Watkins gave a few whacks to his drum kit. Bobby Broom answered with animated licks on the guitar. Bob Cranshaw unfurled a slow and steady line on bass. And trombonist Clifton Anderson joined Sonny for the opening chorus of "Sonny, Please." The title track from his latest album turned out to be a lengthy jam, even for live jazz standards. Throughout it all, Rollins' tenor pierced through the surface, accompanied by his six decades of perspicacity and wisdom.

Although the quintet deserved much of the credit for its sound, the venue helped propel the moment's gravity. Thoughtfully, the organizers sought a change in location for such a marquee artist and occasion (the festival was celebrating its 30th anniversary). Jay Pritzker Pavilion, located in Millennium Park, is a stunning if slightly odd structure. The bandshell is surrounded by massive steel platelets that zig-zag and jut out from the center, giving the stage an other-worldly feel. A giant steel trellis envelopes the audience from above and beams a rich, uniform sound to the audience below. And as the Chicago sun began to dim, Sonny's exhales merged wonderfully with the pavilion's



Saxophonist Sonny Rollins performs opening-night concert.

Photos by Jesse Starita



Jay Pritzker Pavilion

structural grace.

Approaching the halfway point, Rollins delved into "Someday I'll Find You." A silky ballad, Rollins played it while patrolling the stage, showcasing subtle restraint, stylistically and in tone. At 78, he is still capable of fleet and forceful soloing, but is best somewhere in between ballad and burly. Perhaps it's where Rollins is most comfortable now. After a wild life filled with heroin addiction (which he kicked in Chicago in 1955) and stints in jail, a musical equilibrium can have some real value. Friends also help, and when the grey-haired Rollins took frequent pauses to conserve energy, his sidemen stepped in fluidly.

Of particular import was Rollins' nephew, trombonist Clifton Anderson. After a quarter-century accompanying the tenor titan, Anderson'sadroitness

was evident and on full display. His range was most notable—from casual slides and slurs on ballad numbers to a blistering authority and swing on everything else. Inspired by his uncle, who bought him his first trombone at age 7, Anderson seemed to be the most uplifted by the voluminous and vocal crowd.

As the evening receded, the lights of Chicago intensified and a slight breeze blew in off Lake Michigan. I must take one more chorus to repeat: what a stunning place to see a jazz legend! Seeking to end the night on a high note, Rollins entered into a final comfort zone—calypso. Merging jazz sensibilities with Caribbean melodies, Sonny and company ventured south, playing with equatorial heat and fire. Empowered by the rhythm, thousands got up to dance and cajole. A few moments later, Sonny strolled carefully up to the microphone to thank his bandmates and the host city. They walked off stage, escorted by an echo of cheers and claps, only to reappear moments later at the crowd's bidding. Another calypso conversation began.

Six decades after he first picked up the saxophone, Rollins continues to ignite his playing, his personnel and crowds with novelty and vigor. The music really does keep you young.

Concert Review

“Tour de Frank” wows Omaha audience

By Tom Ineck

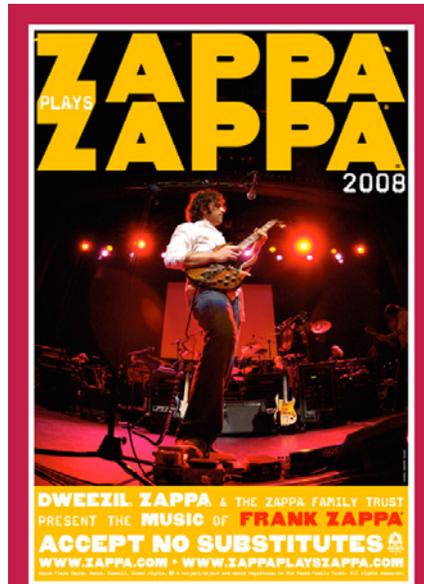
OMAHA, Neb.—Dweezil Zappa’s deep respect for his father’s vast musical oeuvre is immediately apparent in the younger Zappa’s devotion to the music’s integrity in performance. That devotion was on display June 7, when the so-called “Tour de Frank” made a stop at Witherspoon Hall.

The road show, better known as “Zappa Plays Zappa,” has been touring for a couple of years now and has developed an incredibly diverse cross-section of Frank’s often-difficult music to a very high degree of execution. The process began with Dweezil spending more than three years studying his father’s compositions and honing his own guitar technique to a point where he could do justice to the classic, idiosyncratic Zappa sound. It came to fruition with the selection of bandmates who could recreate the music with the right mix of technical proficiency and humor.

In addition to Dweezil on guitar, the band consists of Aaron Arntz on keyboards and trumpet; Scheila Gonzalez on saxophone, flute and keyboards; Pete Griffin on bass; Billy Hulting on marimba and percussion; Jamie Kime on guitar; and Joe Travers on drums, who is also the Zappa family archivist, a handy resource when assembling a truly representative program for each concert. The latest addition to the ensemble is vocalist and guitarist Ray White, who performed and recorded with Zappa senior and who adds another element of authenticity.

With a setlist of more than 20 tunes—many of which segued from one to another—it is difficult to name them all. Needless to say, there was little banter from the stage during the concert, which lasted two and a half hours.

Among the highlights was “City



“Zappa Plays Zappa” 2008 poster

of Tiny Lites,” from 1979’s “Sheik Yerbouti,” one of the recordings on which White appeared. Dweezil delivered one of the evening’s many dazzling guitar solos on this one, showing that he has mastered his dad’s stinging wah-wah style to perfection.

From 1981’s “You Are What You Is,” came “I’m a Beautiful Guy” and “Beauty Knows No Pain.” Returning to “Sheik Yerbouti,” the band turned in a great rendition of “Broken Hearts Are for Assholes,” with Arntz doubling on keys and trumpet and Dweezil switching to his Fender Stratocaster for a solo.

The centerpiece of the concert was a full treatment of the instrumental “King Kong,” a Mothers of Invention classic dating to 1967 but first immortalized two years later on “Uncle Meat.” The tune featured outstanding solos on vibes, keys, bass, alto sax and drums. From Zappa’s more scatological period of the mid-1970s came “Don’t Eat the Yellow Snow.”



Dweezil Zappa

An unexpected treat came at the request of an audience member, as the band tore into a rocking version of the Juan Tizol swinger “Caravan,” with White breaking into some smooth vocalise. That seemed like an apt lead-in to several excerpts from “Joe’s Garage,” including “Wet T-Shirt Night,” “Outside Now,” “He Used to Cut My Grass,” and “Packard Goose.”

The evening would not have been complete without a take on “Cosmik Debris,” and the band delivered in spades. Singer Ray White took a bluesy guitar solo, followed by another guitar solo by Kime and a third solo by Dweezil. Returning for an encore, the band dipped into 1971’s “200 Motels” with “Magic Fingers.”

The audience of 600 seemed largely comprised of fanatic, male Zappa devotees who knew every lick and every lyric from the songbook. Age-wise, the crowd ranged from teenagers to 60-somethings, testimony to the lasting impact of Zappa’s music, at least among a cultish minority of discriminating listeners.

Zappa fans may want to pick up the live, two-disc “Zappa Plays Zappa” DVD, with guest appearances by guitarist Steve Vai, singer Napoleon Murphy Brock and drummer Terry Bozzio. A single CD also is available.

Courtesy Photo

Photo by Michael Mesker

Concert Review

Lao Tizer band brings breath of fresh air

By Jesse Starita

LINCOLN, Neb.—The weather, the Sheldon Art Gallery and the people of Lincoln kept oscillating on June 24. Sunny or rainy? Indoors or outdoors? To go or to not to go? After much debate, the final concert of Jazz in June's 17th season remained external, rain-free and with a substantial crowd of several thousand. And to conclude an equivocal day, the Lao Tizer band submitted an unequivocal statement of their preferred atmosphere—smooth.

This was a welcome change of pace, both from the day's uncertainties and from the past few weeks of traditional, straightforward jazz. Tizer, a keyboardist with improvisational flair and deft touch, led his quintet through a fusion of Latin-tinged, George Benson-esque cookers with the occasional ballad for good measure.

Their first set drew largely from Tizer's (pronounced Ty-zer) acclaimed 2006 release "Diversify." The band instantly locked into a groove on "A Night in the City," which featured Tizer lightly sprinkling notes during his keyboard solo, evoking a Ray Manzarek "Riders on the Storm" quality.

The band shifted gears for the title track from "Diversify." Steve Nieves, the quintet's renaissance man, played saxophone, congas and sang on this lengthy fusion piece. However, the band seemed to bite off more than they could chew and the resulting sound felt forced and contrived. Then, Tizer threw a change-up as he and guitarist Jeff Kollmann collaborated on "Ella's First Light," a gorgeous duet with Kollmann on the upright, classical gui-



Photo by Dao Pham

Keyboardist and band leader Lao Tizer and guitarist Jeff Kollmann

tar. The change in guitars—from electric to classical—was subtle on the surface but indicated the group's affinity for melding rhythms, cultures and styles.

After a halftime spent signing CDs and toweling off from the muggy conditions, Tizer emerged with a pair of rather simple and straightforward Latin jams. But the crowd received a well-needed injection of dynamism during "What It Is" as bassist Andre Manga pounded, pulled, slapped and popped his instrument on an exhilarating three-minute solo. In fact, many patrons stood up to applaud the solo, which, in Jazz in June terms, meant he hit *all* the right notes. Tizer then took a moment to re-introduce the band. Currently based in Los Angeles, Tizer revealed he was born and raised in Boulder, Colo., and joked that "I don't want to get started talking about football rivalries."

As the sun began to set and the

daylight waned, the quintet embarked on a gentle Tizer original called "A Hui Hou," or "Till We Meet Again," in Hawaiian.

The group displayed some excellent chemistry, but this was occasionally undercut by the distracting and unnecessary vocals from Nieves. Regardless, when the band concluded their set with "West Side Highway," the crowd immediately answered with a passionate applause and call for more. Tizer obliged with the Brazilian-based "Blue Bossa" a nice change and fitting conclusion for this worldly, smooth jazz collective.

Equal parts funk, groove, soul and smooth, the Lao Tizer band gave Jazz in June a breath of fresh air and a freewheeling atmosphere just when it was most needed. The crowd's only regret: that rare air and atmosphere will vanish for the next 12 months.

Concert Review

DeMerle band performed as Butch vowed

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Soon after awakening from a six-day, induced coma last October, Butch Berman was visited in the hospital by his wife, Grace, who brought to his bedside a CD entitled “Cookin’ at the Corner, Volume Two,” by The Dynamic Les DeMerle Band. Butch was so moved by the music that he credited it, in part, for his initial recovery.

Butch wrote a rave review of the CD and vowed to bring the band to the 2008 Jazz in June concert series, though as time passed he must have known that his chances of surviving that long were slim. Indeed, he died nearly five months before Les DeMerle and his band took the stage for the June 17 concert. It was left to the rest of us at the *Berman Music Foundation* to welcome them to Lincoln and introduce them on stage.

After being wined and dined the previous night, band leader Les DeMerle, along with his wife, singer Bonnie Eisele, pianist Mike Levine and bassist Jamie Ousley were in good spirits as they took the stage, kicking off with the title track, “Cookin’ at the Corner.” A fine drummer who followed Buddy Rich in the Harry James band and who once kept time for Manhattan Transfer and Eddie Jefferson, DeMerle gave a Latin groove to his rendition of “It Might as Well Be Spring.”

Proving themselves to be family-friendly, they performed the humorous Jefferson showcase “Bennie’s From Heaven,” followed by a scat-singing primer in which DeMerle invited two girls from the audience to join him on stage for a sing-along of “All Night Long.” The popular standards continued with “This Can’t Be Love” and a



Photos by Tom Ineck

The Les DeMerle Band performs at Jazz in June, with (from left) Mike Levine on piano, Jamie Ousley on bass, singer Bonnie Eisele and Les DeMerle at the drums.



Les DeMerle in full Buddy Rich mode



DeMerle coaches girls in scat-singing technique.

Vegas-style medley of “Satin Doll” and “Don’t Get Around Much Anymore.”

Stylistically, the performance ranged from Jobim’s samba “Agua de Beber” to the evergreen romantic ballad “At Last,” with a bluesy piano solo by Levine. “The More I See You” was a vocal duet between DeMerle and Eisele with Les scatting in the Louis Armstrong mode. The flashiest drum solo of the evening came in an uptempo Latin rendition of “What a Difference a Day Makes.” “Red Top” served as the break song.

The second half also had its share

of familiar, popular tunes, including Ellington’s “In a Mellotone,” “Let’s Fall in Love,” Gershwin’s “S’Wonderful” and the ballad “Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?”

The June 17 appearance by the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band featuring Bonnie Eisele gave everyone connected with Jazz in June yet another chance to express their appreciation for many years of financial support from the BMF. We hope that collaboration continues for many years to come.

Concert Review

Thomas quintet delivers moving performance

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Emotions ran high as the Dan Thomas Quintet took the stage for a June 10 performance at Jazz in June. Although the Kansas City-based band had never performed at the popular outdoor summer event, its talented members had been friends of the *Berman Music Foundation* for several years.

Before his death in January, BMF founder Butch Berman ensured that the quintet would have sufficient sponsorship to make it a part of this year's concert series, though he would be unable to attend.

In that spirit, Thomas and his ensemble delivered a moving program of largely original tunes by the saxophonist, keyboard master Roger Wilder and young drummer Brandon Draper, who had appeared a week earlier with trumpeter Darryl White's group. Together with his longtime bandmates, trumpeter Joe Parisi and bassist Bram Wijnands, Thomas confidently led off with his composition "Green Card," a reference to his Canadian citizenship and his move to the states.

Wilder's "The Dodger Says" was an uptempo tune featuring solid solo by Thomas on alto sax, the composer on keys and Draper, whose cliché-free style was a breath of fresh air. Another Wilder tune followed, with Parisi deftly switching from flugelhorn to trumpet. Throughout the evening, he revealed his uncanny ability to play powerful bop runs on the larger horn.

"Shock and Awe" yielded an unforeseen shock when a gust of wind suddenly blew Wilder's sheet music to the stage during a solo, but he recovered with aplomb. Draper's dazzling drum solo had an Eastern flair to it. The drummer's ballad "Looking Up" had



Photos by Tom Ineck

Roger Wilder, Dan Thomas, Joe Parisi, Bram Wijnands and Brandon Draper



Dan Thomas and Bram Wijnands

Parisi on flugelhorn and Thomas on alto stating the melody. The saxophonist took a gorgeous solo. The uptempo "Blues for BLT," from the group's 2005 release, "Musical Sanctuary," was another showcase for Parisi's flugelhorn work, but everyone got ample solo space.

"What is This Thing Called Love" was one of only two standards on the evening's program. Parisi again got the spotlight treatment with a flugelhorn solo, but bassist Wijnands was the main

attraction, taking a bass solo while singing in unison in his trademark vocalise. Draper's tune "Tiles" was funky number with a melody that combined Thomas on alto sax with Parisi on trumpet. Wilder took an excellent piano solo, followed by Parisi, while the composer exhibited his sure sense of time as he improvised a rhythmic backdrop.

Two of a perfect pair, Thomas and Parisi again stated the melody on "Leading the Blind," a pretty tune that offered solo space for Thomas on alto, Wilder on piano, Parisi on flugelhorn and Wijnands on bass. Up next was the title track from "Musical Sanctuary," an obvious expression of Thomas' philosophy that music is a saving grace capable of healing and providing shelter from the storms of life.

For the last tune, Thomas lovingly introduced "The Eternal Triangle," a bop classic by the underappreciated alto saxophonist Sonny Stitt. As an encore, the band played a lilting "Bye Bye Blackbird." It was a fitting farewell both to the very appreciative Jazz in June audience and to Butch Berman, the band's longtime friend and benefactor.

Concert Review

Trumpeter impresses with diversity, technique

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—Trumpeter Darryl White has increasingly impressed this reviewer with his ability to find musicians who are not only compatible but also challenge each other to new creative heights. Such was the case June 3, when the Darryl White Group opened the 2008 Jazz in June concert series with a diverse repertoire and an often-spellbinding performance.

There are several performances with which to compare White's most recent. The **Berman Music Foundation** was there for the trumpeter's 2003 Jazz in June gig, featuring Kansas City saxophonists Bobby Watson and Gerald Dunn. We also were at the Blue Room in KC's famed 18th and Vine Historic District in July 2004, when he performed again with Watson and Dunn at his side. White also made an impressive showing at last year's Jazz in June, as guest soloist with Kansas City singer Angela Hagenbach and the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra.

But this was the best yet, as he fronted a stellar group also consisting of saxophonist Dave Pietro, keyboardist extraordinaire Jeff Jenkins, bassist Craig Akin, drummer Brandon Draper and percussionist Michael Pujado, a native of Chile. Hailing from New York City, Denver, Kansas City and Omaha, they played with a unity that belied their geographical differences.

The six-piece ensemble operated at the top of its game, and its choice of material was unusual and inspired, from the opening gem, "Get Up," written by local musician Paul Krueger, one of White's most promising young trumpet students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It was a mature piece of work that showed both imagination and the urge to swing, which the band did with



Photos by Tom Ineck

Jeff Jenkins on keys, Craig Akin on bass, Brandon Draper on drums, Darryl White on trumpet, Dave Pietro on sax and Michael Pujado on percussion



Brandon Draper

verve. White put on his best Freddie Hubbard style, playing with powerful assurance and a bright, bell-like tone.

A set of tunes by saxophonists began with Joe Henderson's "Mamacita," which churned with hot Latin rhythms and a bluesy feel. Pujado set the mood on congas for a succession of solos by White, Jenkins and the formidable percussion duo of Draper and Pujado. Jenkins' solo was especially notable for its unique blend of drive and dissonance. Kenny Garrett's "2 Step," on the other hand, had Jenkins switching to electronic keyboards and White switching to flugelhorn for a funky ren-

dition of the 1992 tune. "St. Thomas," the classic calypso by Sonny Rollins, was a perfect vehicle for the percussionists, especially Draper's unconventional and unusually melodic approach to the drum kit.

Pietro and Pujado left the stage for a quartet performance of the ballad "Dulce" by pianist Kenny Werner. With White on flugelhorn, Jenkins, Akin and Draper accompanied with great sensitivity.

Pietro's composing skills were on display on his mid-tempo samba "Never Nothing," from 2004's "Embrace: Impressions of Brazil." After the composer stated the lilting melody on alto sax, Jenkins offered an equally lyrical solo before turning it over to the band for a group percussion interlude.

Never too far from his gospel roots, White delivered an exquisite trumpet introduction to "Amazing Grace," which then went uptempo with the whole band. For an encore, they dove into a splendidly celebratory rendition of "When the Saints Go Marching In," sending home the crowd of several thousand with satisfied smiles.

*Tomfoolery***Colorado trip yields good food and music at Jay's**

By Tom Ineck

FORT COLLINS, Colo.—While planning to attend a weekend family reunion in Loveland, Colo., in late June, I decided to make the most of my Rocky Mountain travels by adding a few days in a cabin high on the banks of the Poudre River outside Fort Collins and a few days in Denver.

Berman Music Foundation friend and former Lincoln, Neb., resident Andrew Vogt has called Fort Collins home for seven years, so it seemed appropriate—while in his neck of the woods—to get in touch with Andrew, who also is a wonderful multi-reed player who keeps busy performing gigs throughout the area, when he isn't teaching in Loveland.

We were in luck. Andrew was free for a Wednesday evening dinner before he headed over to a snazzy little club called Jay's Bistro to sit in with pianist Mark Sloniker, who fronts a trio there four nights a week. It was just a couple of blocks from our dinner spot, the popular Coopersmith's brewpub in the city's quaint Old Town section.

After visiting, eating and quaffing the local brews, we strolled over to Jay's for an evening of pleasant musical surprises. Sloniker is a versatile musician and master of ceremonies par excellence, taking requests, chatting with customers between sets and graciously inviting visiting musicians and singers to join the band in its space near the front window. It is evident that he has been doing this for many years and has built a formidable following.

What's more, owners Jay Witlen and his wife, Jacki, have an obvious love and respect for jazz. In addition to being a great restaurant, Jay's Bistro caters to serious music listeners with compatible ambiance and a décor that in-



Photos by Tom Ineck

Saxophonist Andrew Vogt with the Mark Sloniker Trio at Jay's Bistro*Andrew Vogt accompanies a local singer on tenor sax.*

cludes comfy seating, low lighting, lots of wood and brass and jazz posters and other appropriate artwork on the walls. It *felt* right from the moment we entered the door.

The set list was largely comprised of familiar standards, like "Pennies from Heaven," "Fly Me to the Moon," "At Last," and "Misty," but Sloniker also showed a penchant for Thelonious Monk with "Blue Monk" and "Rhythm-a-ning." The band also gave Coltrane a nod with "Equinox," and did justice to Horace Silver with "Song for My Father." Most unusual—and welcomed—

was their version of "Sister Cheryl," a beautiful Tony Williams composition that should be covered more often.

Andrew moved easily from tenor sax to clarinet, soprano sax and alto sax, shifting the tonal center as the rhythm section kept pace. This regular gig is a labor of love for musicians and audience alike, and the fans were still shouting their approval as we headed back up the mountainous Poudre River road for the night.

A couple days later, we returned to Jay's for lunch—al fresco—and it was excellent in every way. If you're in the mood for Southwestern cuisine, try the crab chile relleno. For you panini fans, there's the smoked salmon panini, and pasta lovers will swoon over the linguini with chicken, artichoke hearts and spinach. The dinner menu is even more exotic, including chipotle pork tenderloin, Chilean sea bass and Colorado ostrich (yep, ostrich!) filet.

Whether you're there for live jazz or a good eating, Jay's Bistro is THE hip destination in Fort Collins.

Memorial

Fellow record collector recalls hangin' with Butch

By Dan DeMuth

Editor's Note: Fellow record collector Dan DeMuth spent many hours "hangin'" with Butch, usually talking about the classic jazz, r&b and rock 'n' roll music they both loved so much. They met at Butch's home or, occasionally, on the air at KZUM community radio, where Butch hosted several jazz and soul programs over the years. DeMuth and his wife, Patti, now live in Pueblo West, Colo.

PUEBLO WEST, Colo.—I first met Butch perhaps 15 years ago, although in retrospect I feel I knew him for a much longer time. He had a way of filling the minutes or hours to the max.

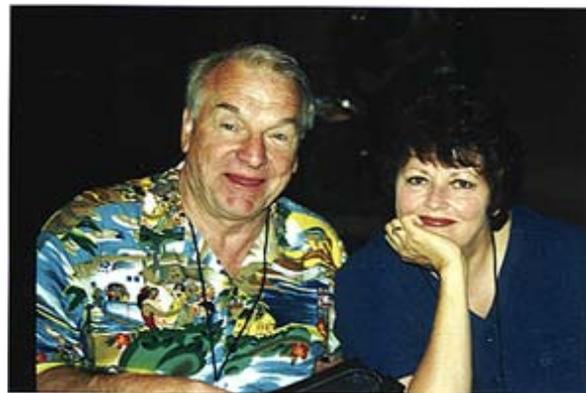
Our first encounter was at the house of a local record seller in Lincoln. Said seller would amass a few hundred records and then call his list of customers, inviting them to make an appointment to look over the merchandise. This dealer would keep any rare 1950s rock and roll or rockabilly in a separate box in which I was allowed to look, but not offer to buy until one of his regulars—Butch—perused them first.

A chance meeting ensued when either Butch or I showed up at the wrong time, which did allow us to meet and discuss our collecting habits. Although fellow travelers in the record-collecting business, more often than not our times together were spent in hanging out, something he really dug.

A typical "hanging session" would be initiated by a phone call

from Butch suggesting we meet at his place on a certain day at a certain time. Upon arrival, the itinerary (predetermined by Butch) would be discussed—what we would do first, how long I should stay, who was coming later and so forth. There would follow a dissertation on his current likes and dislikes, ranging from local personalities and events to music artists.

Reservation was not one of his traits. He let it all hang out. More often than not I would find myself suggesting there might be some gray



Dan and Patti DeMuth

areas worth a little reconsideration—that all was not black and white. This usually resulted in the emanation of a grin, notwithstanding the fact he would still have a final word on the subject. These sessions were very convivial, possibly fueled by a tendency for me to imbibe (just a smidgeon) while he preferred inhaling.

Bars or clubs were generally not on his list of places to hang. We would occasionally dine out together, his preferences being fried chicken or oriental cuisine. I don't recall ever being asked if I had a prefer-

ence, but that was just Butch. Anyone who knew him well understands he didn't mean to be offensive. In fact, the opposite is true. He could be generous to a fault. He simply had his world molded in the manner he wanted and assumed everyone else did the same.

Butch would occasionally invite me to hang out while doing one of his programs on KZUM. This would frequently find me stealing furtive glances at the board while music was playing, hoping to God that damn studio mike was *really* off during our "off air" conversations.

We traveled to and/or attended many of the same functions, be they jazz concerts in Lincoln, Kansas City or Topeka, or combing through stacks of records in shops in Iowa, Minnesota or Colorado. I'm missing all of those times with Butch's passing. I'm also missing the hanging out we did via e-mails and long distance phone calls after I moved to Colorado.

And I'll wager that somewhere Butch is hangin' out with somebody, although I'm not sure who's setting the schedule, whether the jazz is cool or hot, or for that matter, who's having the final word. He is missed.

Editor's Note: The Pueblo West View newspaper in its Aug. 28 edition ran a story on Dan's record collection. You can read the story at the Pueblo West View website: www.pueblowestview.com

Memorial

Butch's friend Mark Dalton shares memories

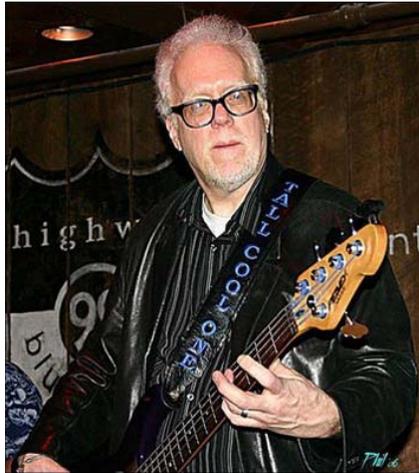
By Mark Dalton

Editor's Note: Bass player Mark Dalton's friendship with Butch Berman extended back to their mid-teens. Dalton left Lincoln, Neb., in 1973 and settled in the Northwest, but he stayed in touch with Butch until the end. We asked Mark to share some of his memories of those early days.

SEATTLE—Butch and I pretty much started performing together at the beginning. We'd both been taking music lessons for a long time and were ready to start performing.

I got the jump on him by maybe six months. I first met Berman and Tom Hinds at a Nine-Hi dance that we—the Starfires—were playing at the Antelope Pavilion. They were just getting the Exploits together. I was 15, Butch was 14.

I joined the Exploits about a year later, and we eventually got a new drummer (Tif Tyrell, the Exploits' drummer, was on the football team, and lost his focus on music after awhile) and mutated into the Impacts, a good surf and rock band. We were totally into three



Mark Dalton still plays bass in the Seattle area.

bands at that point—the Dave Clark Five, the Kingsmen and our main heroes, from Boulder, Colo., the Fabulous Astronauts!

Astronauts' singer and lead player Rich Fifield was a huge role model for all of us—Butch, Tom and I all took turns playing lead and singing. If you've never heard the Astronauts' two live albums, you should. No history of Midwest rock and roll is complete without knowing those two albums, available on

a double CD from Bear Family. They came through Lincoln a lot, and we all went to see them every time they came to town, to study their playing AND their showmanship. We studied both aspects, in as many bands as we could see, *religiously*. We both also loved the Fabulous Flippers, of course.

When I was a senior at Lincoln Southeast High School, though, I got a chance to join the Vogues, with some older, more seasoned players, and I took it. Butch and I permanently parted ways as bandmates at that point. He went on to start the Modds, a good Lincoln “white soul” band, with my cousin, Ron Bumgarner on Hammond B3, and then hooked up with Charlie Burton, went to San Francisco and had many other adventures, as did I.

We would always hook up back in Lincoln, though, at his place or on stage at the Zoo Bar, and stayed friends until the end. Butch loved music. He was in love with music the night I met him, and he never wavered, he never lost one bit of his love and devotion for music. It was in his blood.

As far as looking back, that's really all I have. I don't know if you saw the piece I wrote for Butch after I came back for induction into the Nebraska Hall of Fame. I swore that would be my last bit of writing about the old days in Nebraska (it's been 35 years since I left in '73, after all) and it almost *has* been the last, but I guess you've coaxed a little bit more out of me.

Thanks for keeping BMF going!

Editor's Note: If you want to see what Mark Dalton is up to these days, go to www.youtube.com and type in Surf Monkeys. That's Mark on bass.

Jazz education takes another hit

The world of jazz education is mourning the loss of the one organization that was dedicated to this specific field of music as the IAJE (International Assn. of Jazz Educators) has officially closed its doors.

According to a letter from Chuck Owen, the President of IAJE on April 18, “the board voted to file for bankruptcy under Chapter 7 of the Federal Bankruptcy Law.”

This leading music education

association, which had over 8,000 members, an international convention, a bi-monthly journal, and a history of over 40 years has been crushed under a mountain of debt, according to an article in the Seattle Times.

The Times article indicated that the organization is rumored to have been over \$1 million in debt, according to Greg Yasinitsy, an IAJE division coordinator.

*Friends of the BMF***Alaadeen to write “The Rest of the Story” manual**

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Jazz master and educator Ahmad Alaadeen has been awarded a grant from the Fund for Folk Culture to write “The Rest of the Story,” a jazz methods manual based on his approach to teaching.

This project is made possible by a grant from the Fund for Folk Culture’s Artist Support Program, underwritten by the Ford Foundation, with additional support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Based in Austin, Texas, the Fund for Folk Culture is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the dynamic practice and conservation of folk and traditional arts and culture throughout the United States.

“I grew up in Kansas City, Missouri in the 18th and Vine area, the neighborhood which was the center of a vital African-American community and the place where the distinctive sound of Kansas City Jazz emerged,”



File Photo

*Ahmad Alaadeen at the 2005
Topeka Jazz Festival*

said Alaadeen. “I learned jazz immersed in this community, from the oral tradition, directly from that first generation of jazz masters. Over the years I’ve

seen jazz moving away from the African-American community, and the traditional way I learned it into the jazz studies programs found in universities. In many jazz studies programs in formal institutions, music theorists write down on paper what a particular jazz master was playing and teach that to the student. When I was coming up if you took a solo and sounded like anyone else, you would be booted off the stage.”

“The Rest of the Story” is being written from the perspective of a traditional musician, from a performer’s viewpoint rather than that of a theorist. The manual will include stories about Alaadeen’s life experiences, as well as photos. It is hoped to reach and inspire musicians across a broad spectrum to reach deeper inside the music to find their own expression.

NJO announces 2008-2009 concert season

The Nebraska Jazz Orchestra has announced its 2008-2009 season.

Season tickets are \$90 for adults and \$48 for students. New subscribers can get season tickets at 50 percent off.

General admission tickets for individual concerts may be purchased in advance or at the door. Ticket prices are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. Concert times and locations:

“L.A. Legend,” Friday, Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m., Cornhusker Marriott, 333 S. 13th St. Trombonist Bill Watrous has done it all, from playing with such big bands as Woody Herman and Quincy Jones to performing on “The Ed Sullivan Show.”

“Christmas and All That Jazz,” Thursday, Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m., Embassy

Suites, 1040 P St. The Nebraska Jazz Orchestra will put you in the holiday mood with seasonal favorites.

“Learning From the Master,” Thursday, Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m., Cornhusker Marriott. Young talent will be featured along with Mike Tomaro, multi-talented woodwind performer, composer, arranger, and director of jazz studies at Duquesne University. Tomaro will perform with the NJO and the 2009 Young Lions All-Star Band.

“It’s Not Rocket Science,” Tuesday, March 24, 7:30 p.m., Cornhusker Marriott. With a degree in aerospace engineering, percussionist Dana Hall now leads a number of his own groups and performs with the Chicago Jazz Ensemble. Included in this

concert will be a local jazz ensemble as part of the “Jazz 101” program.

“Plays Well with Others,” Tuesday, May 19, 7:30 p.m., Cornhusker Marriott. This concert will feature one of L.A.’s most highly sought trumpet players, Wayne Bergeron, and the winner of the 2009 NJO Young Jazz Artist Competition.

The NJO season also includes a popular annual event, a Valentines Day dinner and dance on Feb. 14, at 6 p.m. at the Cornhusker Marriott. The concert features Big Band classics and is not included with season membership.

For more information, call the business office at (402) 477-8446.

Jazz on Disc

“Imagina” another stellar addition to Allyson catalog

By Tom Ineck



KARRIN ALLYSON *Imagina* Concord Records

Like all great song stylists, Karrin Allyson has instilled in her many fans and friends a sense of personal relationship over the years, a sense that we know her intimately through her music. She brings this intimacy to every performance and every recording. With “Imagina: Songs of Brasil,” her 11th release on the Concord label, she fully indulges a longtime passion and allows us to share that passion.

Allyson first revealed her love for the music of Brazil on her 1992 Concord debut with Jobim’s “Insensatez (How Insensitive).” The following year she recorded “One Note Samba” and “Dindi,” and since then she has added “So Danco Samba,” “Corcovado (Quiet Nights),” “O Pato (The Duck),” “Caracao Vagabundo (My Vagabond Heart)” and others to her growing repertoire. But this is the first time she has devoted an entire project to this intoxicating South American music.

It comes as no surprise that Allyson again has chosen old friends and longtime bandmates to accompany her in the studio. Guitarist Rod Fleeman’s unique nylon-string tech-

nique is especially noteworthy, and the solid rhythmic component of drummer Todd Strait has become an essential element of Allyson’s sound. Also prominently featured are Gil Goldstein on piano and accordion, Steve Nelson on vibes and marimba, David Finck on bass and Michael Spiro on assorted percussion.

For the broader understanding of listeners who do not understand Portuguese, Allyson has thoughtfully injected English lyrics by several composers, including two by Susannah McCorkle, two by Gene Lees, one by Jon Hendricks, one by Paul Williams, and two songs recently adapted by lyricist Chris Caswell, who collaborated so fruitfully with the singer on her 2006 release, “Footprints.”

A devoted and accomplished student of the Portuguese language, Allyson realizes the lush lyrics with her usual poise and confidence. It is a joy to hear her express all the mixed emotion inherent in the opening track, “A Felicidade (Happiness),” with additional English lyrics by McCorkle.

The little-known Jobim composition “Correnteza” is a revelation in Allyson’s gorgeous reading, and Vinicius de Moraes’s “Medo De Amar (Surrender the Soul)” is equally stunning. Her natural ability to combine vulnerability and sensuality makes Allyson the perfect interpreter of this complex music. That complexity is illustrated by the delightful “Estrada Branca (This Happy Madness),” which began its life with a much darker theme than its Lees lyric would suggest. Like-

wise, the English lyrics for “Pra Dizer Adeus (Time to Say Goodbye)” shift the meaning from a suicide note to a lover’s fond farewell.

Jobim’s first composition, the obscure title track “Imagina,” is a lilting waltz that benefits greatly from the blending of Goldstein’s accordion and Nelson’s vibraphone. Fleeman plays in unison with Allyson’s breezy, scatting vocal on “Vivo Sonhando (Living on Dreams),” which also features a lyrical solo by Finck.

Here at the **Berman Music Foundation**, every new Karrin Allyson release is anxiously anticipated, and “Imagina” is another great addition to her catalog.



THE VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA *Monday Night Live at the Village Vanguard* Planet Arts

There is nothing quite like the visceral wallop of a jazz orchestra in full cry, especially when heard live in the confines of a small club with a capacity audience of devoted music lovers. Such is the thrill experienced—albeit second-hand—while listening to the two-disc “Monday Night Live at

the Village Vanguard,” the latest recorded document by the Vanguard’s superb “house band.”

That’s one reason that The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra remains relevant 42 years after it began its regular Monday Night gig, nearly 30 years after founder Thad Jones left the band and 18 years after the death of drummer Mel Lewis, who fronted the band after Jones’ departure. The current ensemble is more than just heir to the legacy of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra, and more than just a repository for the classic compositions of Jones. It is one of the most vital, exhilarating examples of big-band composition, arrangement and execution.

“Monday Night” actually is drawn from performances on Feb. 10-11 (Sunday and Monday), just a few days before the band’s Feb. 15 appearance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts here in Lincoln. The intimacy of the venerable New York City club is an aural counterpoint to the more sterile environment of the 2,200-seat concert hall.

Aptly, six of the 11 tunes were composed and arranged by Jones. The first is a long-lost arrangement of his lilting composition “Mean What You Say.” Pianist Michael Weiss, who transcribed the original recording for the big band, sets the stage for trumpeter Scott Wendholt and tenor saxophonist Ralph Lalama, who play with plenty of emotion. Terell Stafford on flugelhorn pays tribute to Jones on “Say it Softly,” again with the original Jones arrangement.

Bob Brookmeyer’s brilliant arrangement of “St. Louis Blues” gets a 16-minute treatment with outstanding solos by trombonist Luis Bonilla, trumpeter Wendholt, alto saxophonist Dick Oatts and pianist Weiss. The cleverly shifting tempos and stop-time breaks keep things interesting. Another standard, “Body and Soul,” utilizes a Jerry Dodgion arrangement for

a smoky take by Gary Smulyan on baritone sax. Lalama returns on tenor for a sustained funk groove on Jones’ “Mornin’ Reverend.”

Pianist Jim McNeely takes over on his composition “Las Cucarachas Entran,” a jumping, leaping little number driven by drummer John Riley and featuring Rich Perry on tenor sax, and Dick Oatts and Billy Drewes on soprano saxes. Next up is “Willow Tree,” a Fats Waller tune with echoes of “Willow Weep for Me.” Bassist Phil Palombi and trumpeter Stafford inject it with the proper blues power. Dipping into the pop music world, the band does Jones’ great arrangement of Stevie Wonder’s “Don’t You Worry ‘Bout a Thing,” which inspires Oatts to mix the brass colors on soprano sax and piccolo.

John Mosca excels on his trombone solo during “Kids Are Pretty People,” a soulful ensemble tune that also has standout solo work by trumpeter Wendholt and a plunger-muted cadenza by trumpeter Stafford. “The Waltz You Swang for Me” is a whimsical Jones composition that does, indeed, swing in waltz time. This time, the solos go to trombonist Jason Jackson and soprano saxophonist Drewes. The set closer is “Little Rascal on a Rock,” a Jones favorite that swings gently with lots of woodwinds and muted brass. Bassist Palombi solos with aplomb, followed by Smulyan on baritone and McNeely on piano.

This project would be nothing but good news if it weren’t for the fact that Dennis Irwin, the VJO’s bassist for 25 years, died from the effects of a spinal tumor on March 10, at age 56. The recording is dedicated to him.

Totaling more than 90 minutes on two discs, “Monday Night” is an accurate representation of a couple of sets at the Vanguard. Next time you’re in NYC on a Monday night, make sure it’s on your itinerary.



BRIAN BLADE & THE FELLOWSHIP BAND
Season of Changes
Verve Records

At long last, drummer Brian Blade has reassembled his breakthrough Fellowship Band and revisited its unique sound—a blissful marriage of jazz, folk, rock and classical elements that is totally devoid of the usual fusion clichés.

The last we heard from them was on back-to-back Blue Note recordings—1998’s “Brian Blade Fellowship” and 2000’s “Perceptual.” We also were fortunate to experience them in a riveting live performance at the 1998 Kansas City International Jazz Festival.

Returning band members include keyboard whiz Jon Cowherd, guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel, saxophonists Myron Walden and Melvin Butler and bassist Chris Thomas. The only missing element is Dave Easley, whose pedal steel guitar use to add another dimension to the already-eclectic sound. But even without Easley, the Fellowship Band remains in a league of its own.

Like its predecessors, “Season of Changes” can bring a listener to tears with its profoundly beautiful melodies, such as on the opener, “Rubylou’s Lullaby.” It also can soar on the shimmering waves of Rosenwinkel’s slippery fretwork, as on the nine-minute Cowherd composition “Return of the Prodigal Son,” which also sets Butler loose on an

Jazz on CD continued from page 23

extended Coltrane-like tenor solo.

“Stoner Hill” is a gorgeous tune, with everyone contributing to the folk-derived melody as it slowly builds. The 12-minute title track, also penned by Cowherd, begins with a somber piano introduction of a darkly classical cast, with tenor sax and bass clarinet adding colors. Suddenly, Blade kicks it into a rocking tour de force, aided and abetted by Rosenwinkel. A moody piano-bass counterpoint is at the heart of “Most Precious One,” which segues into the solid rock of “Most Precious One (Prodigy),” dominated by Blade’s backbeat and Rosenwinkel’s fuzz-toned guitar fusillade.

“Improvisation/Alpha and Omega” has Walden on bass clarinet pairing off with Cowherd on pump organ for a haunting, introspective piece. The woody, acoustic tonal quality evokes an ancient, surreal setting, perhaps a strange worship ceremony in a medieval church. The closer, Blade’s soaring “Omni,” begins slowly, builds in intensity and opens to a lovely piano solo before resolving to its haunting chord changes.

Technically, most of the tunes are taken at ballad tempos, but they can be deceptively complex in their construction, venturing far beyond the safe confines of smooth jazz or New Age noodling. The music always is challenging—to musician and listener alike—but never alienating.

The Fellowship Band has a powerful group ethic, everyone listening and giving the best effort for the overall sound. It is the very definition of fellowship and a refreshing alternative to the ego-driven projects of many jazz artists.



SAXOPHONE SUMMIT
Joe Lovano, Dave Liebman,
Ravi Coltrane
Seraphic Light: Dedicated to
Michael Brecker
Telarc Jazz

What better way to honor the memory of the great saxophonist Michael Brecker than a gathering of Brecker friends Joe Lovano, Dave Liebman and Ravi Coltrane for a recorded tribute to their fallen comrade? “Seraphic Light” wonderfully documents that gathering.

Brecker died at age 57 in January 2007, after a two-year battle with MDS and leukemia. His final recorded document, “Pilgrimage,” was reviewed in the January 2008 edition of the Berman Music Foundation newsletter.

Bringing diverse influences and styles to the project, the three saxophonists merge their unique expressions for a truly moving experience, which was first exhibited on Saxophone Summit’s 2004 debut recording, “Gathering of Spirits,” featuring Brecker instead of Coltrane. Since John Coltrane figured so prominently in Brecker’s playing and in the formation of Saxophone Summit, it is fitting that the younger Coltrane, just a year after his mother’s death, has an opportunity to pay his respects.

Also making significant contributions are distinguished bandmates Phil Markowitz on piano, Cecil McBee on bass, Billy Hart on drums, and Randy Brecker, who is featured on two tracks. Each of them con-

tributed one composition to the session, as did the three principal players.

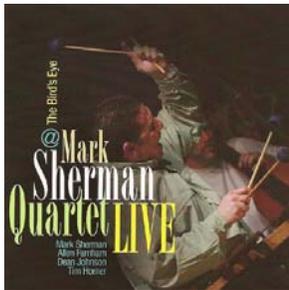
This is an ensemble recording in which each member plays an integral role, but it remains primarily a trio statement by three very powerful players. That’s clear from the opening moments of Markowitz’s “Transitions,” with Coltrane and Lovano on tenors and Liebman on soprano sax, harmonizing and playing in unison. Ravi Coltrane’s “The Thirteenth Floor” brings world music strains to bear with Liebman on C flute and wooden flute and Lovano on alto clarinet and Scottish flute. The first ballad comes with “All About You,” a 1973 tune by McBee that features some heart-stirring tenor by Coltrane.

Randy Brecker’s contribution is the frenetic “Message to Mike,” as though the irresistibly bouncy nature of the tune could reach beyond the grave. “Alpha and Omega” is Liebman’s offering and he digs into its mysterious changes on soprano sax, as Lovano swirls high around him on alto clarinet and Coltrane plumbs the lower depths on tenor sax. Lovano’s “Our Daily Bread” returns things to a more even keel and a more hopeful spirit.

The last three tracks—all from the pen of John Coltrane during his later “free” period, all arranged by Liebman and all showcasing the tenor sax—are the most profound statements, as though the Saxophone Summit trio is calling up the spirits of Coltrane and Brecker. “Cosmos” is a three-tenor tour de force that delves into Trane’s “sheets of sound” motif. “Seraphic Light” is a majestic statement with epic performances by the threesome (Lovano switches from tenor to double soprano sax for this one) and an absolutely astounding drum solo by Hart.

“Expression” adds Randy

Brecker to the fray on trumpet for a nearly 10-minute, truly blissful expression of love for fallen brothers. In a heart-aching resolution, it ends with Hart rapidly tapping the bass drum peddle, then suddenly stopping, as if the beating of a heart had just been cut short—sort of like the untimely loss of John Coltrane at age 40 and Michael Brecker at age 57.



MARK SHERMAN QUARTET
Live at the Bird's Eye
Miles High Records

We very enthusiastically reviewed vibraphonist Mark Sherman's 2005 release, "One Step Closer," and his 2007 release, "Family First." So, it comes as no surprise that the underappreciated band leader has produced another gem, this time the double-disc "Live at the Bird's Eye."

With just 10 tracks stretching over 100 minutes across two CDs, the performances crackle with energy, improvisational zeal and imagination. That is due largely to the very compatible nature of the superb foursome—Sherman, pianist Allen Farnham, bassist Dean Johnson and drummer Tim Horner.

They fly out of the gate on the opener, a bebop barn-burner called "Tip Top Blues." Sherman correctly identifies his lovely mid-tempo composition "The Winning Life" as "a real band signature type of tune." It is indicative of the band's upbeat mood and the playing is inspired, especially Farnham's long exploration

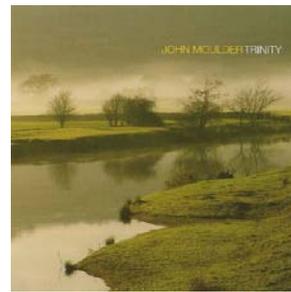
of the changes. "Trust" is an odd polyrhythmic ballad that challenges the rhythm section to hold down the tricky time as Sherman soars above them on vibes.

Farnham contributed his gorgeous ballad "Hope," and everyone treats it with sensitivity and personal expression. My personal favorite tune may be the lively "Hardship," another crowd-pleaser that draws out the best from each of the players as they settle into a fast blues groove. It ends the first CD with gusto.

From "Family First" comes "Explorations," a 12-minute paean to the harmonic innovations of John Coltrane. Horner is especially explosive as he drives the ensemble throughout and is showcased in a series of drum breaks as the tune grows in intensity. Sherman dips into the standard repertoire for the first time with a leaping Latin rendition of "You Don't Know What Love Is." Again, Horner comes on strong, romping through this one with infectious glee. "There is No Greater Love" begin at a more relaxed pace, allowing Johnson to step into the spotlight for a brilliant solo before turning it over to the rest of the band.

The "Tip Top" theme returns on "Tip Top Rhythm," a rhythmically complex exercise for all. Horner confidently takes his place at the steering wheel, guaranteeing that none of the players lags behind. Farnham turns in another virtuosic bop solo, and Johnson. For a well-deserved encore, the band turns to an old favorite, Henry Mancini's romantic ballad "Moon River."

Throughout this generous live recording, the quartet exhibits an artistic compatibility and a genuine love of the music, and the audience responds accordingly.



JOHN MOULDER
Trinity
Origin Records

Guitarist John Moulder's latest CD actually was released in 2006, but it has taken this long for me to come to grips with this extraordinary recording. It does not fit neatly into any stylistic category. Its performances do not swing in any traditional sense. It contains no familiar melodies, and its 13 tracks are sequenced thematically and range from snippets of less than a minute to extended explorations of seven or eight minutes.

I found myself returning again and again to its haunting theme—expressed thusly by Moulder in the liner notes: "God's love for humanity and our sharing in divine life is a luminous mystery. . . 'Trinity' is my musical interpretation of our journey in God from the primordial to the eternal."

Far from being a proselytizing religious tract masquerading in the thin guise of innocuous music, "Trinity" is an inspired and inspiring exploration of musical moods richly orchestrated and beautifully performed by an unusual ensemble of musicians. Aptly, it is divided into three parts, each with three compositions—beginning with "Chaos," "Creation" and "Exodus," continuing with "Incarnation," "Proclamation of the Unexpected" and "Sorrowful Mysteries" and ending with "Pieta," "Resurrection" and "Freedom." But a listener need not be aware of the titles or the thematic content to enjoy this stunningly beautiful and diverse music.

Jazz on Disc continued on page 26

Jazz on Disc continued from page 25

Among the most notable featured players are Oregon's Paul McCandless on English horn and bass clarinet; pianist Laurence Hobgood, singer Kurt Elling's regular keyboardist; and drummer Paul Wertico, who has been long associated with Pat Metheny.

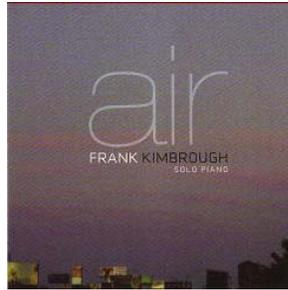
"Chaos" does, indeed, disintegrate into chaotic disharmony, but "Creation" rises from the rubble with a lush flugelhorn solo by Tito Carrillo and some stinging, searching acoustic guitar lines by Moulder, all held together by the rest of the ensemble. "Exodus" is an odd-ball blues with some great unison lines by Moulder on electric guitar and Ken Hall on vibraphone. Hobgood's piano solo gets strong support from bassist Eric Hochberg and drummer Eric Montzka before Moulder comes charging back with another solo statement.

McCandless enters on English horn with exquisite poise on the ballad "Incarnation," creating a pastoral, peaceful mood. Wertico and bassist Kelly Sill drive the swinging "Proclamation," the closest thing here to a conventional post-bop composition. McCandless returns on "Sorrowful Mysteries" with the haunting mournfulness of the bass clarinet as the perfect foil for Moulder's deeply smoldering guitar.

"Pieta" is a gorgeous ballad duet with Moulder playing the chord changes on acoustic guitar and McCandless on English horn soaring high. A tinge of gospel piano introduces "Resurrection," which seems to rise from a simple ballad to a yearning ensemble piece featuring Carrillo on flugelhorn, Jim Gailloro on alto flute and Geoff Bradfield on soprano sax, along with the rhythm section. With Wertico's breezy march rhythm and Moulder's bluesy electric guitar and multi-tracked dobro and acoustic guitar, "Freedom" completes "Trinity" with a sense of exhilaration, if not exaltation.

Stylistic hair-splitters may accuse

Moulder of veering too close to New Age or jazz-rock fusion—depending on which track they're referring to—but I prefer to think of "Trinity" simply as an ambitious, well-realized project that shows Moulder is not only a passionate composer but a talented guitarist, arranger and bandleader, regardless of the mood he's in.



FRANK KIMBROUGH
Air
Palmetto Records

"Air" is Frank Kimbrough's third release on Palmetto and—oddly—his first solo piano project in 20 years of recording. It is an exquisite portrait of this amazing player, whose lyrical style has been compared with Keith Jarrett, Bill Evans, Brad Mehldau and the rest of the usual suspects. Still, Kimbrough is underappreciated for his vast technique, tasteful execution and singular sound.

As a sideman, his list of credits is long and illustrious, including stints with singer Kendra Shank and in Maria Schneider's big band. He appeared in Lincoln with both artists last year. He also has performed and recorded with various members of the Jazz Composers Collective, a group he co-founded in 1992 to allow the young artists more creative expression.

A formidable composer, Kimbrough wrote five of the nine tracks here. But he also pays his respects to the works of others, including the opener, "It Should've Happened a Long Time Ago," a dark,

classically constructed piece by drummer Paul Motian. The pianist's unique sense of space and time is beautifully illustrated in this stirring rendition.

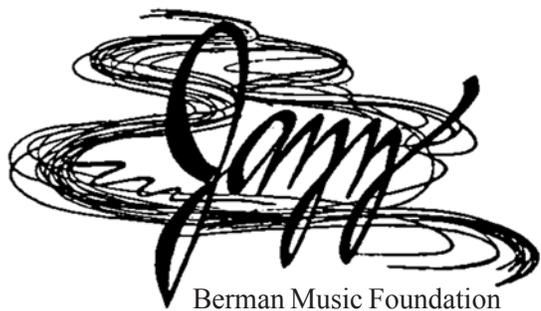
Thelonious Monk gets the nod twice, starting with "Coming on the Hudson," on which Kimbrough explores melodic variations over a bass ostinato. In a very slow arrangement of Monk's "Jackie-ing," the odd chords echo and the notes shimmer. Duke Ellington's "Wig Wise" gets a subtly bluesy reading as Kimbrough constructs a series of subplots, finally descending to the final note.

Kimbrough's own "Quickening" owes something to Monk's quirky rhythmic approach, but it also allows the composer a harmonic flight into the more esoteric territory of Jarrett, or perhaps Cecil Taylor. The title track has plenty of the "space" implied in the title, as Kimbrough seems to feel his way emotionally from one change to the next.

Despite its title, Kimbrough transforms "Three Chords" into a rich musical tapestry. "The Spins" does, indeed, seem to spin in a kind of twisted waltz time. The syncopated "Ca'lina" is, no doubt, Kimbrough's affectionate and downright joyful tribute to his Carolina home.

Occasionally, Kimbrough's mournful interludes can evoke sadness in a sensitive listener. Under the circumstances, perhaps it is relevant to note that the North Carolina native—who has called New York City home since 1983—is a passionate opponent of the Iraq War. In the liner notes, he thanks the many musicians "who have touched and inspired me, and perhaps even preserved some portion of my sanity in an increasingly insane world."

With his own music, Kimbrough brings much sanity to a world in dire need.



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From the Archives

**Butch and piano phenom
 Eldar visit at Topeka fest**



File Photo

The Berman Music Foundation had been covering (and sponsoring) the Topeka Jazz Festival since its inception in 1998. One of that year's featured players was 11-year-old piano phenomenon Eldar Djangirov. Three years later, Butch and Eldar posed for this photo at the 2001 Topeka festival. The following month, Eldar performed at the Jazz in June concert series in Lincoln, Neb., sponsored by the Berman foundation.

How can you help the foundation?

The Berman Music Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) private foundation, and your tax-deductible donation will help offset the costs of this newsletter and its programs.

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