



File Photo

Sheila Jordan

Jordan and Brown duo perform in Lincoln Feb. 8

By Tom Ineck

Lincoln jazz fans had their first opportunity to bask in the warmth of Cameron Brown's bass when he appeared with pianist George Cables and drummer Victor Lewis at last summer's memorable Jazz in June performance.

Brown returns to Lincoln Feb. 8, this time to perform a duo concert with legendary jazz vocalist Sheila Jordan. It's a 7:30 p.m. show at Westbrook Music Hall, 11th and R streets on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln city campus.

The singer had a long relationship in a similar duo setting with bassist Harvie Swartz. Brown reconstructed Jordan's bass-voice history in a recent phone interview.

"The first time she did the bass and voice was with (Charles) Mingus," Brown said. "Later, she worked a lot with Steve Swallow, before he switched over to only play electric bass. She was working with a band with (pianist) Steve Kuhn, Harvie and (drummer) Bob Moses, and the duo kind of evolved out of that."

The Jordan-Swartz duo was to last more than 17 years, suggesting compatibility between the human voice and the deeper tones of the

stringed instrument. Brown has his own idea of what makes the marriage work so well.

"To me, there's always been something special about the power of the human voice," he said. "There's something about the transparency of the sound. Obviously, the two instruments don't come into each other's ranges at all, so you have this very transparent thing of the two-part harmony of the melody and the bass line. It's also a lot what Sheila brings to it, and the little arrangements that she works out, and the medleys. It's a very intimate ensemble. Sometimes, we're playing and I'll look up and realize that she's so close to me. It's almost like she crawls into the bass sometimes."

Brown's personal rapport with Jordan is another, more obvious factor in the duo's success. The two met in 1974 and have performed together in other group settings, but the recent merger as a duo is especially exciting for Brown.

"For me personally, on a lot of different levels, it's a huge thrill," he said. "The thing about Sheila is that she goes back to a very personal relationship with Charlie Parker, as well

Jordan-Brown continued on pg. 4

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Prez Sez

New year brings good news and then some

By Butch Berman

Dear jazz santas, elves and elves,

A major-league holiday greeting to you all. Even though you'll be reading this in 2003, I'm beginning this letter to you all on Christmas Day of '02... and filled with many feelings.



Butch Berman

First of all, this is my second Christmas with my beloved fiancée, Grace—and words can't truly describe how happy and content I am with our relationship and upcoming wedding in May. I'm not ashamed to admit, I've worn my heart on my sleeve... so you fans of our newsletter in the past few years could probably read between the lines and tell that I wasn't always a happy jazz camper. My spiritualists—Ananda from the West and Reggie Arthur in New York—predicted that my future would change for the better between my 52nd and 53rd birthdays. Well, lo and behold, Grace's and my paths crossed, thanks to Jimmy Apken, and now we walk together, more at "home" than I've ever been.

Obviously, gratitude and thankfulness are now what I'm full of... for a change. That's why, ever living in the shadow of 9/11, dealing with our shaky (at best) economic situation, and the possibility of war ever looming, we too have a little bad news to share.

Thus, allow me to tell you that you're holding our last paper newsletter. In order to make ends meet, and try to regroup and recoup some of our resources, we (like many others) had

to downsize and cut our budget for 2003. We still plan to come to you four times a year—online—and will utilize our extensive mailing list to further alert you, our readers, of our upcoming projects and adventures.

Please bear with us on this, and feel free to continue to give us feedback and stay involved with our ongoing pursuit to present, preserve and protect jazz.

Past, present and future jazz news

My dear friend, BMF consultant and percussionist personified Norman Hedman—as in Norman Hedman's *Tropique* from New York City—came to town for some important biz.

He recorded some samples to augment our new website, now under development, and Norman—the computer whiz that he is—helped tune up our occasionally problematic computer (I should name it "Hal"). We also firmed up plans for a new CD with a partially new configuration of *Tropique*, featuring vocalist James "D-Train" Williams. The love affair with Grace and me inspired a new Hed-tune entitled "Angel of the Night." Catch the new band, and pick up his upcoming release, *Because I Can*, at Jazz in June on June 3 in Lincoln. Much more on that in our spring online issue.

I'm also proud to say we helped bring back my old pal and alto sax champion Greg Abate to appear the week after Norman, with returning Cincinnati pianist Phil DeGreg and a master rhythm section consisting of Harvie S. (formerly Swartz) on bass and Billy Hart at the drum helm. Local trumpeter and educator Darryl White brings his stellar band from

Colorado for the third week, and a special surprise artist will round out another blockbuster summer jazz spectacular.

Before I jet out of here, I want to thank again Dean Haist and Melissa McCoy from Arts Incorporated and the staff from P.O. Pears that made the six regional shows that we showcased there over the last 15 months such critical successes. We almost broke even a couple of times, so we plan to do it again next fall.

I also want to mention keyboardist Tom Larson, whose jazz history class makes these Pears shows a requirement and helps broaden these kids' jazz awareness. These days that's what it's really all about.

Let's close on that high note (or blue note) and the best to you all in 2003 from all of us.

Jazzically yours,

Newsletter goes online

Beginning with the spring 2003 issue of *Jazz*, we will come to you exclusively online at www.bermanmusicfoundation.org.

Visit the website for all the latest details on Midwest jazz, especially those events sponsored by the Berman Music Foundation.

The electronic newsletter will be published quarterly, with frequent updates and archives of past newsletters made available.

Printable newsletters also will be available online.



Photo by Butch Berman

Bahji Gandu (left) and Julie Felzien

Friends of Jazz Music proves its healing power

By Butch Berman

Music is a healing tool. Either on the playing end or the listening... the power of this age-old medium is endless. Now the stepfather-to-be of a strapping 19-year-old boy-man named Bahji Gandu, I recently witnessed this theory take wings. Angel wings, no less, belonging to a piano teacher named Julie Felzien, who my massage therapist Kassi Riordan referred me to.

Bahji, you see, was born autistic and requires much controlled, supervised stimulation. Little did I know when I purchased a piano for my fiancée Grace Gandu's household from Gourlay Brothers that it would have such a definitive impact.

Now... let me back up a long way, to my early 20s. I met a sage-like gentleman named Daniel McCurdy who turned me on to his (at the time) far-out concept of how music affects us, in much more depth than I'd ever imagined before. He felt that each note not only had a distinctive tone and

sound vibration, but that to each tone a color is generated that affects us internally. Consequently, certain chords could be constructed to alter the mood of whomever the sound waves envelope. The ability to render relaxation to sleep, or excitation to anger could be utilized as an educational and/or therapeutic massage. Therefore, music could more naturally and more gently replace medication or controlled substances that would produce the same effects.

Given this background, Julie is starting to develop a program to enable Bahji to use the piano as a positive tool to help balance his neurological challenges. Music is transformed into almost a mantra to help calm and smooth him out.

In the future, we will continue to chronicle this fascinating saga of Bahji's development and share them with you, our concerned readers interested in mental health issues.

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Trustee: Butch Berman
Consultants: Dan Demuth, Norman Hedman, Steve Irwin, Gerald Spaits and Wade Wright



Cameron Brown

File Photo

Jordan-Brown continued from pg. 1

as a profound musical relationship with Charlie Parker. Playing with Dannie (Richmond), I got to sort of have a bridge to Mingus. Playing with Sheila, I feel like I have a more authentic bridge to Bird. It's so exciting. She has absorbed so much of his tradition. A lot of the tunes that she sings are songs that Bird played. We do 'If I Should Lose You,' for example, which is a song that Bird played. You have the lyric and the meaning of the song, but you also have the scatting and the thing that Bird brought to that music, improvisationally."

Jordan's singing style is unique and more closely related to the phrasing of horns than it is to more conventional crooners.

"She feels like she was more influenced by horn players, in terms of the way she phrases," he explained. "Even though she's absolutely singing the song and delivering the lyric and thinking about the lyric, the way she does it is coming more from the way horn players played, rather than the way other singers might have done it."

Brown and Jordan have released "I've Grown Accustomed to the Bass" (reviewed in the Summer-Fall 2002 issue) and are working up tunes for a second recording. They also are preparing for a two-week European tour.

Born in December 1945, Brown began his career in the mid-1960s, recording with trumpeter Don Cherry and composer, arranger and music

Sheila Jordan is jazz vocal legend

By Tom Ineck

Sheila Jordan's idiosyncratic vocal style is influenced more by instrumentalists than by other singers. One of the most consistently creative of all jazz singers, she has a relatively small voice, but she is one of the few vocalists who can improvise lyrics that actually make sense (and rhyme). She also is a superb scat singer and an emotional interpreter of ballads.

Born Sheila Jeanette Dawson on Nov. 18, 1928, in Detroit, Mich., she was still in her early teens when she began working in Detroit clubs. She was a member of a vocal trio called Skeeter, Mitch and Jean (she was Jean), sort of an early version of the more famous Lambert, Hendricks and Ross.

In the early 1950s, she moved to New York, where she married Charlie Parker's pianist, Duke Jordan, and studied with bassist Charles Mingus and pianist Lennie Tristano. She made her first recordings under her own name in the early 1960s, including "Portrait of Sheila" on Blue Note. Her collaboration with George Russell, "The Outer



Sheila Jordan

File Photo

View," yielded a famous 10-minute version of "You Are My Sunshine."

Her appeal remained narrow until the late 1970s, when her popularity increased as she began to record more frequently, including sessions with pianist Steve Kuhn, bassist-arranger Steve Swallow, pianist-composer Carla Bley, trombonist Roswell Rudd and, most prominently, with bassist Harvie Swartz. She and Swartz recorded numerous duo sessions, which she has continued with bassist Cameron Brown on their recent release "I've Grown Accustomed to the Bass."

theorist George Russell, creator of the Lydian mode. Over the course of the next three decades, Brown worked with a wide range of jazz musicians in many different styles, including trombonist Roswell Rudd, saxophonist Archie Shepp and drummers Beaver Harris, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Ed Blackwell, Idris Muhammad and Joe Chambers.

"The critics have a tendency to pigeonhole styles and compartmentalize the music too much," Brown said in a recent phone interview. "I really hear the music as one whole cloth. It feels, to me, very organic to play all those dif-

ferent styles. My early influences, interestingly enough, were the so-called avant garde. I got a chance to be around Don Cherry quite a bit when I was 19 years old, which was very inspiring. He was such a charismatic guy. He just lived and breathed music."

Of course, growing up in Motor City had a big impact on him, as well.

"When I was a kid in Detroit, I got to hear Miles and Blakey and Coltrane come through, and they'd play a whole week in Detroit. I worshipped at the altar of (bassist) Paul Chambers. My dad loved Dixieland, so I listened to Louis Armstrong, Fats



Cameron Brown

File Photo Chet Baker, Ted Curson and Terumasa Hino, saxophonists Booker Ervin, Lee Konitz, Jane Ira Bloom and Dewey Redman, vocalist Betty Carter, and the John Hicks Trio.

But it was at the mere mention of his 8 ½-year tenure with the Don Pullen/George Adams Quartet—featuring pianist Pullen, saxophonist Adams and drummer Dannie Richmond—that Brown was quick to acknowledge that association as a career high point.

“This was the band of my life. To get to stand next to Dannie Richmond for 8 ½ years and just absorb the depth and breadth of his musicality was just incredible.” The quartet continued until Richmond’s death in March 1988. A sporadic composer, Brown wrote “Lullaby for George, Don and Dannie” and “For Dad and Dannie,”

dedicated to Richmond and Brown’s father, who also died in ’88.

In addition to his collaborations with vocalist Sheila Jordan, Brown in recent years has worked with saxophonist Joe Lovano, Lou Donaldson and Houston Person, singer Etta Jones and pianists George Cables and Marc Copland, as well as his own ensemble, Cameron Brown and the Hear and Now. He has appeared on more than 80 recordings.

“I’ve Grown Accustomed to the Bass,” the Feb. 8 performance by Sheila Jordan and Cameron Brown, is a collaboration of the BMF, Aging Services PEAK and the Seniors Foundation, with additional funding from the Nebraska Arts Council. Tickets are \$15 for the general public and \$10 if you’re age 60 or older. Call (402) 441-7158 to reserve seats.

Waller and Sidney Bechet.”

Brown also performed or recorded with trumpeters Donald Byrd,

Discorama

Paduart’s live recording is highly flammable

By Butch Berman



IVAN PADUART
Trio Live
Virgin Music Belgium

On fire are the first two words that come to mind while reviewing Belgium’s Ivan Paduart’s 2001 CD entitled *Trio Live*, recorded at L’Espace Paul Delvaux.

I love it when an artist occasionally recreates his live set on a CD that you can revisit at will. You’ll feel the fire and passion in Bill Wimmer’s review of Ivan’s bristling show at P.O. Pears in Lincoln (*see review on page*

10), with a stellar rhythm section consisting of K.C. bassist Bob Bowman and fellow Topeka native and long-time stablemate Todd Strait, who recently relocated from K.C. to Portland, Ore.

On this recent effort, recorded in 1999, Ivan is joined by his European rhythm section, comprised of Stefan Lievestro on bass and Hans Van Oosterhout on drums. It’s a rich mixture of originals and tunes by current artists, with only “I’ll Remember April” reaching back.

Ivan’s live performance demands your attention and rivets your gaze on his animated concentration. A little McCoy Tyner there, a little Bill Evans here and a lot of Ivan throughout, this latest in a strong catalog of releases is solid and inspiring. But live... on fire!



BILL MCKEMY
Duende

Herky, jerky, quirky, like France, like Berlin, like San Francisco, like international, man... maybe even interplanetary. Like wow!

Dark, brooding, mysterious... maybe even deep. Bill McKemy... jazz...this CD—magnificent. Why? I dunno, but I really dig this weird, wired piece of genius. Alan Watts would have dug it, too, and so will you.

Music for the mind—ingest, let go and... dream away.

Talley Quartet cultivates common ground

By Tom Ineck

Eight years and three full-length recordings have done wonders for the Doug Talley Quartet, honing the group's sound to a fine edge and liberating the soloists to attempt more adventurous flights within the security of a long-standing relationship.

The Kansas City quartet's veteran status is a rarity in jazz, where musicians shift allegiances with the seasons, moving as stylistic or economic needs dictate. Saxophonist Talley and his cohorts—pianist Wayne Hawkins, bassist Tim Brewer and drummer Keith Kavanaugh—are the exception, four talented artists who have cultivated a common ground where all are able to express themselves and continue to grow as a team.

That was apparent in their Dec. 5 appearance at P.O. Pears in downtown Lincoln. Whether performing original music or unique interpretations of familiar standards, the rhythm section was always in the pocket and everyone effortlessly followed the often-difficult changes.

Vincent Youmans' "Without a Song" kicked things off with an impressive tenor sax statement by Talley. Shifting to a Latin mood, the quartet launched into a mid-tempo reading of Clare Fischer's "Pennsativa," with

Hawkins delivering a stunning solo on his versatile Kurzweil keyboard.

By contrast, they attacked the standard "Autumn Leaves" in an unconventionally fast tempo, propelled by Talley's driving tenor statement, full of interesting twists and turns, building in momentum and spinning off variations on the theme while Brewer and Hawkins deftly traded interweaving lines.

With a mid-tempo rendition of Charlie Parker's "Billie's Bounce," they proved their ability to play the blues with feeling. Cole Porter's classic "Night and Day" accelerated from a medium tempo, moving from an opening tenor statement to a brilliant keyboard solo by Hawkins. Throughout the tune, and throughout the evening, the transitions were flawless.

Again drawing from their 1998 Cole Porter tribute CD, *Night and Day: Musings on the Cole Porter Songbook*, the group played a Hawkins arrangement of "I Concentrate on You," with Brewer stating the melody on bass, followed by Talley on soprano sax and Hawkins on piano. Talley and Brewer took brief solos, with Talley exhibiting a lovely "cool" tone on soprano.

Porter, the favored composer of the evening, got another nod with an up-tempo "I Love You," arranged by Kavanaugh. After solo statements from Hawkins, Talley (on tenor) and Brewer, Kavanaugh brought it all together with a solo that demonstrated his ability to easily change direction while keeping the time constant. Hawkins was the star on an up-tempo version of Porter's "Just One of Those Things." Talley's unaggressive—almost passive—playing on tenor was overwhelmed by the pianist's two-fisted Tynesque style.

"Polka Dots and Moonbeams" got a delicious reading with Talley on tenor, shifting from a ballad to a medium



Doug Talley

Photo by Rich Hoover

tempo. Another outstanding piano solo was followed by a tenor/bass finale.

Dipping into their most recent recording, 2001's original *Kansas City Suite*, Talley and company belted out the swaggering "Pendergast," a reference to the tough boss who ruled Kansas City as mayor in the 1920s and early 1930s. Hawkins's piano solo and comping was pounded out in an aptly two-fisted style. Also from the KC suite came "City of Fountains," shifting from waltz tempo to a straight 4/4 and back again. Well-named, the tune had a bright, shimmering, bubbling major-key



Tim Brewer

Photo by Rich Hoover



Keith Kavanaugh

Photo by Rich Hoover

Talley and crew lend personal insights into jazz

By Tom Ineck

Saxophonist Doug Talley and his longtime bandmates are as engaging in the classroom as they are on the performance stage. That became clear when the Kansas City quartet attended a Dec. 6 session in front of Tom Larson's jazz history class at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

A couple of hundred students gathered to hear the quartet in the lecture hall at Westbrook Music Building. They were treated to a well-chosen clutch of tunes, both old and new, as well as some personal insights into the world of the professional jazz musician.

The Talley quartet began with a bit of Kansas City jazz history entitled "Basie and the Pres," an original piece from the quartet's CD *Kansas City Suite*. The bluesy swinger, of course, pays homage to Count Basie and tenor saxophonist Lester Young (also known as "Pres"), whose careers were launched in the musical hothouse of 1930s Kansas City.

Switching to a Latin rhythm, the quartet evoked the Spanish architecture of KC's Country Club Plaza in "Plaza Lights." The stark rhythmic contrast between these two tunes sparked a discussion about the importance of time in jazz music. With examples, pianist Wayne Hawkins expertly delineated the differences between samba, salsa, montuno and



Photo by Tom Ineck

Doug Talley Quartet performs for UNL jazz history class.

Afro-Cuban styles.

Talley's arrangement of Cole Porter's "Love for Sale" served as another excellent example of time changes, smoothly moving from 6/4 to 4/4.

The subject then turned to the musicians' backgrounds and what led them to jazz. When Talley was growing up, for example, his father, while not a musician himself, loved to play Dixieland-style recordings at home. Like many who grew up in the 1960s, Hawkins was a Beatles fan, but had loved music in general from a very early age. Bassist Tim Brewer, whose dad was a drummer, began playing in rock bands when he was just 13. Drummer Keith Kavanaugh turned from rock to jazz in high school.

Finally, the subject of income reared its ugly head. Most jazz musicians, even in Kansas City, can't make a living at music alone.

Of the four, only Hawkins is a fulltime musician, but he supplements jazz performances with composing and arranging jobs, commercials and documentary films, jazz and classical symphony gigs. Talley is a music teacher and conducts youth camps. Brewer is a dentist, and Kavanaugh is a graphic artist specializing in designing CD covers.

In its music and its commentary, the Talley quartet shed new light on the agony and the ecstasy of following the jazz muse.

optimism about it, which was reflected in Hawkins' upbeat solo.

Brewer's tribute to his son, "For John," was a tender waltz that received an especially creative solo from Hawkins. Porter returned with a wonderful, buoyant rendition of "Love for Sale," that featured an intriguing Hawkins solo. Porter's great ballad "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" fol-

lowed, with Brewer stating the melody line, which was then taken up by Talley on tenor.

Sending everyone home with a smile was a very



Wayne Hawkins

fast rendition of "Cherokee," building from tenor and drums, then adding bass and keys to finish with a grand finale.

Again, the quartet exuded a confidence that results from years of working together—in long hours of rehearsal and in heat-of-the-moment improvisation.

Photo by Rich Hoover

Westport Art Ensemble even better live

By Tom Ineck

In concert, the Westport Art Ensemble (wae) generates an excitement level that transcends even its extraordinary recording debut.

The wae's highly anticipated performance Oct. 10 at P.O. Pears in downtown Lincoln exceeded all expectations, providing a showcase for the Kansas City quintet's artful composing, arranging and playing skills, as well as its symbiotic and adventurous interplay.

Perhaps the youthful vitality can be attributed to the fact that saxophonist Josh Sclar, guitarist Jake Blanton and drummer Ian Sikora are all in their 20s, and keyboardist Roger Wilder is in his 30s. At age 44, the eldest by a decade is veteran bassist Gerald Spaits, who sounds particularly inspired in such young company.

In "Seascape," a Spaits composition, the musicians' individual contributions were not so much solos as statements in an ongoing discussion. Sclar's cleverly titled



Gerald Spaits

"Dot of Oz" paired Sclar's tenor sax with Blanton's shimmering guitar lines in an ominously spiraling melodic line expertly anchored by Spaits' bass.

Wilder contributed "Labyrinth Therapy," another complex composition with an incessantly pulsating rhythm and percussive flourishes. In his solo statement, Wilder explored the electronic keys in spirit kindred to Herbie Hancock.

Even the cover tunes proved imaginative and even provocative. Lennon and McCartney's "I'm Only Sleeping" again paired Sclar on tenor with Blanton's fleet-fingered guitar passages in an intriguing reconstruction of the Beatles song.

Wilder's "Haenehmehr" accelerated rapidly out of the gate, launching Sclar into the tenor stratosphere and allowing the composer to respond with a brilliant piano solo, all held together by Sikora's solid drumming.

Despite the recent loss of the

group's founding drummer—the ubiquitous Kansas City time-keeper Todd Strait (who has moved to Oregon)—Sikora is an admirable successor in a setting that demands an advanced sense of time and varied percussion talents.

One of the highlights of the evening was a guest appearance by percussionist Norman Hedman, who was visiting from his home in New York City as a BMF consultant.

Hedman first joined the quintet on Sclar's "Theme for This American Life," a Latinesque ramble that was a perfect vehicle for Hedman's virtuosity on congas. His percussive statements gradually grew in intensity and complexity, obviously amazing and inspiring his bandmates. He took another conga break during "Elisha's Safari," a Todd Strait composition for his son.

Guitarist John Abercrombie's



Jake Blanton



Josh Sclar

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover



Roger Wilder

Photo by Rich Hoover

some I Could Cry.” Wilder sat this one out while Sclar and Blanton took the spotlight. Interestingly, many of the quintet’s arrangements end with a slow fade, instead of the usual, clichéd finales.

Hedman again contributed his considerable skills on congas to Sclar’s “Late Call,” a slow tune again featuring the combination of tenor sax and guitar.

In a humorous vein, the wae brought the show to a close with a wildly careening blues number, the aptly titled “Almost Hit That Lady.”

Throughout the evening, it was the young saxophonist Sclar who most impressed this listener with his composing and playing skills, his wit and sense of adventure. It came as no surprise when it was announced that he had just moved to New York City to pursue a career in the jazz capital of the world.

Since then, guitarist Blanton also has made the eastward move,

moody “Arcadia” was an interesting choice for a cover tune, and the quintet created an appropriately stately, even solemn atmosphere.

By comparison, the Spaits composition “Worlds Past” was bright and optimistic, featuring an inventive and hard-blowing tenor solo by Sclar.

Sclar was back in the spotlight for his own tune “Eden or Lucas, Kansas.” Playing fast and loose with the changes, the saxophonist took listeners on a captivating excursion to the outer limits before turning it over to solo statements by Wilder and Blanton.

Perhaps the most interesting performance of the evening was the quintet’s version of the Byrds’ late-’60s hit “Eight Miles High,” whose soaring lines purportedly were inspired by the tenor flights of John Coltrane. Led by Sclar’s saxophone, the group quickly got to the essence of the melody, then Hedman took a spirited solo on congas as Blanton and Wilder provided lush harmonies.

Another inspired cover was a Spaits waltz-time arrangement of Hank Williams’ “I’m So Lone-



Ian Sikora

Photo by Rich Hoover

leaving the remaining trio to pick up the pieces. The seeds of greatness are in the Westport Art Ensemble. Let’s hope they continue to grow, even in the care of new “gardeners.”

The quintet’s Lincoln performance was funded by the **Berman Music Foundation**.



Norman Hedman

Photo by Rich Hoover

Paduart benefits from K.C. stalwarts

By Bill Wimmer

Belgian pianist Ivan Paduart appeared Sept. 12 at P.O. Pears in Lincoln as part of the **Berman Music Foundation's** local concert series.

When I arrived, the trio was well into "It Could Happen to You," with some spirited trading of fours bringing it back to the head. Paduart was lucky to be accompanied by the ever-supportive Bob Bowman on bass and drummer Todd Strait, two of Kansas City's finest.

The group then launched into Fred Hersch's "Rainwaltz," a nice mid-tempo waltz with a sparse, pretty melody. Paduart, showing his Bill Evans and Hersch influence, was enjoying the beautiful rhythm section, and I was enjoying Bowman's fat tone finding his way on new material, with nice rhythmic diversity and dynamics.

Next up was the standard "Like Someone in Love," with Strait on the brushes and Bowman laying down a loping two-beat groove. Paduart ate up the changes in a solo marked by double-time flourishes. Bowman was impressive in his turn and Strait followed with a very tasteful display of brushwork. "The Mood Is Due" was a pretty waltz from pianist Enrico Pieranunzi that Paduart used to feature lush chordal statements. A direct Herbie Hancock-inflected solo from Paduart showed more of his broad influences.

The band then took a break, and while discovering that Ivan's limited English and my complete inability at French wouldn't give me any extra insight to his playing, I had the most interesting chat with Todd Strait and Bob Bowman. My first comment to Todd was, "Too bad they couldn't get you a drum set with a working high hat," because he had to play most of



Ivan Paduart

the first set without the use of his sock cymbal, and no one else in the crowd noticed, or missed it.

Chuckling, Todd informed me that they were his drums and not a borrowed set, and that the high hat broke so badly on the first song of the night that he just did without it. Many

musicians would be really upset if their equipment failed onstage, but a great player with a beautiful attitude like Strait just shrugged it off and said it made it a little more of a challenge. Bowman told me that he didn't even miss it! You've got to love these guys.

The group came back with "I Hear a Rhapsody," introduced by Paduart's up-tempo solo introduction and a rousing solo with dashing runs up and down the keyboard, which was a nicely tuned baby grand provided by Dietze Music House. Bowman had a nice solo spot with a lot of quick double-stops, and the group traded fours with the drummer, who shone at this burning tempo, even without a high hat setting the beat.

Paduart chose the ballad "I Fall in Love Too Easily." It's tough to play a ballad in a crowded bar, but he pulled it off pretty well. The bassist stole the spotlight on this one with a tasteful, melodic solo, without the pyrotechnics most bassists can't resist when they get their chance to shine. They followed with a Michel Petrucciani tune that had a nice open



Bob Bowman

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

A section in 2, a swinging bridge and nice, cascading changes.

The group then explored the Chick Corea waltz "Windows." Paduart, who obviously favors things in 3, gave Bowman a lot of space, which he used to great advantage in his solo statement.

The trio finished with Benny Golson's "Stablemates," one of the great originals in jazz, which was arranged and somewhat reharmonized by Paduart. This is a beautiful song with a few twists and turns of its own and a rare harmonic beauty of its own, and while this version was musically correct, it really lacked some of Golson's blues sensibility and came off a little European, if you don't mind me saying so.

The original release of this tune was with pianist Bobby Timmons and trumpeter Lee Morgan, after all, and I must admit, other than an interest-



Photo by Rich Hoover

Todd Strait

ing modulation of the ending with it going through 4 keys, this arrangement was lacking. You don't need to reharmonize Benny Golson, OK?

That being said, this concert was a big success, with a large crowd that included more adult listeners than usual and an unusually fine piano trio

that you won't hear the likes of here any time soon.

These guys came to play and all in attendance were impressed with the results. This was an excellent show by all accounts and we will really miss Todd Strait, who recently moved to Oregon.

On the Air Jazz and blues on Nebraska radio

Compiled by Tom Ineck

Nebraska Public Radio KUCV 91.1 FM Lincoln

FRIDAY: 10 p.m.-midnight, "The Jazz Show" with Graham House
SATURDAY: 7-8 p.m., "Big Band Spotlight" with Don Gill; 8-10 p.m., "Early in the Evening" with Dave Hughes; 10 p.m.-midnight, "Late in the Evening" with Dave Hughes
For a program guide, call 800-290-6850.

KZUM Community Radio 89.3 FM in Lincoln

MONDAY: 6-8 a.m., "Uncle Booga's Coffee and Tea Time" with Larry Kubert; 8-10 a.m., "Dance Bands: When Melody was King" with Con Good; 10 a.m.-noon, "Jazz Journey" with Bill Wimmer; 1-3 p.m., "Dave's Closet" with Dave Hoffman; 3-4 p.m., "Blues Quest" interviews; 4-6 p.m., "Another Blue Monday" with Dr. Blues; 8-10 p.m., "Hotter Than That" with Warren Rudolph
TUESDAY: 2-6 a.m., "NightHawk Radio" with Rich Hoover; 1-3 p.m., "Djust Djazz" with Doc Davidson; 3-6 p.m., "Blues and Other Related Stuff" with Ken Hoage; 10

p.m.-midnight, "Variations on Jazz" with Ed Rumbaugh

WEDNESDAY: midnight-2 a.m., "Spindle" with James, Joseph and Jonathan; "Round Sunrise" with Carl Schneider; 1-3 p.m., "The Best of Brazil" with Randy Morse; 3-6 p.m., "Mystic Mile" with Mike Flowers

THURSDAY: 1-3 p.m., "Rachel's Jazz" with Rachel Principato; 3-6 p.m., "Bare Bottom Blues" with Tammy Lee; 8:30-10 p.m., "NightTown" with Tom Ineck

FRIDAY: 1-3 p.m., "Women's Blues and Boogie" with Carol Griswold; 3-6 p.m., "Confessin' the Blues" with Jim Anderson and Bill Wagner

SATURDAY: 6-9 a.m., "Blues at Sunrise" with Brendon McCauley
For a program guide, call 402-474-5086.

KIOS

91.5 FM in Omaha

MONDAY: 1-2 p.m., "Beale Street Caravan"; 2-3 p.m., "Blues in the Afternoon," with Mike Jacobs
TUESDAY: 1-2 p.m., "The Brazilian Hour"; 2-3:30 p.m., "Jazz in the After-

noon" with Chris Cooke

WEDNESDAY: 1-2 p.m., "Piano Jazz" with Marian McPartland; 2-3:30 p.m., "Jazz in the Afternoon" with Mike Jacobs

THURSDAY: 1-2 p.m., "One Night Stand" with Chris Nielsen; 2-3:30 p.m., "Jazz in the Afternoon" with Chris Cooke

FRIDAY: 1-2 p.m., "Jazz from Studio 1"; 2-3:30 p.m., "Jazz in the Afternoon" with Mike Jacobs

SATURDAY: 8-9 p.m., "Jazz Profiles"; m., 9-11 p.m., "Jazz Junction" with Rick Erben; 11 p.m.-midnight, "Last Call"

For a program guide, call 402-557-2777.

KVNO

90.7 FM in Omaha

FRIDAY: 7 p.m.-2 a.m., "JazzSource" with Cortland Kirkeby and Stacy Robinson

SATURDAY: 6 p.m.-2 a.m., "JazzSource"

KIWR

89.7 FM in Council Bluffs

SUNDAY: 9 a.m.-noon, "P.S. Blues" with Rick Galusha

Woods brings youthful energy to The Folly

By Bill Wimmer

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Saxophonist Phil Woods fronted a quintet as a part of The Folly Theater Jazz Series Oct. 12. I last saw Woods in 1977 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, so I looked forward to seeing this living legend perform again.

Woods looked much as he did all those years ago, and his playing hasn't lost a step, either. Drummer Steve Goodwin and bassist Steve Gilmore have played with Woods since that time, and they anchor the rhythm section and breathe together as one. Pianist Bill Charlap has been playing piano for Woods for a few years now and also has developed quite a telepathic rapport with the leader. Jon Gordon, on alto sax, is a former student of Woods' with some nice recordings of his own and a style that contrasts nicely with Woods.

The band opened with a Woods original titled "All Bird's Children," featuring nice harmonies for the horns and a singing solo by Woods. Woods showed his obvious approval with the band's support and with Charlap and Gordon's solo statements. The saxophonist then told the story of how a couple from the area whose great Uncle had composed the song "We Could Make Such Beautiful Music," and realized he was going to be in Kansas City, had e-mailed him. Woods said the couple was in the house, and that he would love to honor them by playing the song and meeting them after the show. Nice touch. The band played a nice arrangement with tight harmonies by the horns and a hot Woods contrasting with a little cooler, more studied Gordon and a fine Charlap solo.

Gordon was featured on the standard "Invitation," which he opened up a cappella, setting up the song's Latin groove. He played an excellent solo, followed by a brilliant trip through the changes by Charlap. Gilmore quoted



File Photo

Phil Woods

"Stranger in Paradise" in his turn, and Goodwin played an interesting drum solo with his hands for great dynamic effect. Saying that it was fitting to play a Charlie Parker tune in Kansas City, Woods tore into "Chasin' the Bird," a seldom heard Parker blues line that gave the band a chance to stretch out on the blues. After a Gordon solo, the band traded a spirited set of fours that brought the first set to a rousing end.

The band opened up after a break with the Oscar Pettiford bop anthem "Bohemia after Dark." Woods took an incredible solo on this one, featuring a series of call-and-response phrases with himself and showed that he is a master of nuance and dynamics. Charlap really impressed me as he backed up other soloists and on his own flights.

Charlap was featured next on Parker's famous version of the Gershwin tune "Embraceable You," and he played the ballad for all it was worth. Parker's original improvised melody is considered one of the most pure melodic statements in jazz, and it was really worth hearing in the hands of a master like Charlap. The piano was turned up louder in the second set, which had been the only drawback of the sound earlier in evening. It was a treat to hear Charlap

at a time when his career has skyrocketed to the point of having Tony Bennett appear on his last CD.

The group then returned to feature the leader on Billy Strayhorn's "Bloodcount," one of the prettiest and most dramatic ballads in jazz. Dedicating it to Johnny Hodges, Woods showed why he is still the greatest living exponent of the alto with his steaming and streaming glissandos and ability to wail one second and whimper the next. The eldest on stage, Woods made old men out of the others all night long.

After an interesting arrangement of "If I Should Lose You," the concert changed gears a little when hometown favorite David Basse came onstage.

Basse is a singer/entertainer who has a lot of stage presence and charisma but tends to take it a little too far for his own good. Although Basse sounded fine on a couple of numbers, his onstage mannerisms and delight with his own utter hipness took away from the music. I longed for Kevin Mahogany, who wouldn't have to rely on his hat for a stage prop like this guy to get his message across.

The band finished up with the same closer that Phil has been playing for years, a tune that combines a medley of about 10 songs you recognize and makes you laugh as they fly by.

This was a great concert by one of the true masters who has stayed at the top of his game for many years. The Folly has an excellent jazz series this year and is a great place to hear a concert. It's disappointing that we have virtually nothing going on at the Lied Center when just up the road The Folly has Phil Woods, Rene Marie, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Jimmy Cobb's Mob featuring Randy Brecker, the John Pizzarelli Trio, The Dave Brubeck Quartet and James Moody all in one year!

Latest KC trip was both social and musical

By Butch Berman

Grace and I set out upon our third sojourn to my adored “second home,” K.C., and had the usual royal blast.

My main focus on this occasion was twofold. After checking into our lovely suite at the Heritage House at Sixth and Central (I highly recommend this fab, cozy, but spacious New York loft-style accommodation, with free breakfast and lots of amenities, including off-street parking and oh, so close to all the chosen venues) we prepared ourselves for another excellent dining experience at the Majestic on Broadway.

This time, we planned a dinner party with as many of our K.C. associates as were available. Included, besides Grace and myself, were sax great Ahmad Alaadeen and his manager, Fanny, and former co-organizers of the defunct but forever memorable K.C. International Jazz Festival John Jessup, radio and stage personality (and date, Kathy) and Steve Irwin of the Marillac Foundation and his wife, Jo Boehr (a fine singer in her own right), dear friends all.

We had planned to meet, eat and dig the sounds of one of my faves, drummer Tommy Ruskin, and his talented wife, songstress Julie Turner. Turns out Tommy had another engagement, so Julie, along with her guitarist son Brian and pianist-vocalist Mike Ning entertained and joined us for awhile.

Ning, one of the nicest guys I’ve ever met in the biz, gave me two CDs—one I’ve heard and the other still on deck. I think you’ll enjoy *I Remember Mr. Evans*—a tribute by Mike and his partner, Sherry Jones. In fact, when in K.C.



Butch Berman introduces wae

Photo by Grace Gandu



Westport Art Ensemble at CD release party, Westport Coffeehouse

Photo by Butch Berman



Ahmad Alaadeen, Julie Turner, Fanny

Photo by Butch Berman

stop by the Music Exchange in Westport and check out their amazing local CD selection. If you read ‘bout it here and they got it there, just flat get it!

After leaving the Majestic, most of us, including late arrival bassist Gerald Spaits, adjourned to the Heritage House to discuss jazz and future potential collaborations into the wee, wee hours. In all, a grand evening of delicious food and drink, the usual top-notch K.C. sounds and the best friends and fans of jazz you could ask for.

The next evening, as expected, was just a gas. This was the CD-release party of the Westport Art Ensemble, with funding from the **Berman Music Foundation**. They performed in a theater-like atmosphere, with great stage, lights and sound housed beneath the Westport Coffeehouse in the heart of

K.C.’s famed night-life hot spot on Pennsylvania Avenue.

A huge crowd of pals, families, jazz lovers and the curious just hanging provided the perfect foil for the terrific music awaiting them.

The band was in high gear that night, with everyone blasting on all cylinders. Bassist Gerald Spaits, saxophonist Josh Sclar, guitarist Jake Blanton, drummer Ian Sakura and keyboardist Roger Wilder make up the wae. There were lots of pix snapped, tons of CDs sold and a shitload of new and old fans to remember this evening for years.

Since then, only Gerald, Roger and Ian (who replaced the legendary Todd Strait, now residing in the Northwest) remain in K.C. as, like birds leaving the nest, Jack and Josh headed off to live ‘n’ learn more about it all in N.Y.C. Still, a band that caused such a stir in their jazzy community and whose CD was received favorably nationally, will at least regroup periodically to continue recording and sharing their creativity and evolution.

Stay tuned for K.C. trip No. 4 and our first totally online newsletter, coming to you this spring.

Tomfoolery

Darryl White reveals complex personality

By Tom Ineck

I recently had an opportunity to sit down and chat with Darryl White, trumpet professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a growing favorite trumpeter among jazz fans throughout the Midwest. The interview was recorded for future broadcast on “Live and Local,” engineered, produced and edited by Craig Lowe for KZUM Community Radio in Lincoln.

In the course of the hour-long interview, White revealed a complex personality, containing both a bold, uncompromising musical vision and a tender, sentimental feeling toward his family, his friends and his art.

A Cleveland, Ohio, native, White lived in Chicago, Grand Junction, Colo., and Denver before moving to Lincoln six years ago to take the professorship held for many years by the revered Dennis Schneider, who was retiring.

White’s first job as a professional musician was actually in the classical realm, with the Denver Brass and its off-shoot, the Aries Brass Quintet, a group-in-residence at the University of Denver.

“From that, I made a lot of connections, and shortly after I started with that group, I established a little jazz group, which was the beginning of what I have now.”

What he has now is a first-rate, straight-ahead jazz quintet that since 1995 has maintained a consistent lineup also featuring Nebraska native Jeff Jenkins on piano, Dave Pietro on alto sax and flute, Matt Houston on drums and Artie Moore on bass. Bassist Kenny Walker of Denver also has become one of White’s first-call colleagues and is featured on White’s current release, *In the Fullness of Time* (reviewed on page 15).

As they are booked into venues

throughout the Midwest, the band members gather from their respective homes to join their talents.

“It’s interesting. When we do gigs, we don’t get a chance to rehearse much. We pull everybody together, throw ‘em on a plane and we show up an hour before the gig and talk about the music. But they’re all great musicians.”

They have to be. White’s own compositions and the tunes he chooses to cover are not simple ditties with changes that can be learned during a 10-minute rehearsal. Even the titles reflect his thoughtfulness. “Chronophage,” for example, is Greek for “time-eater,” a phrase used by one of White’s mentors, trumpeter John McNeil, to describe someone who wastes his time.

“In the Fullness of Time” is a Biblical reference. South African Bishop Desmond Tutu used it in a speech that White attended at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln. Not long after that, White heard it in a sermon at his church.

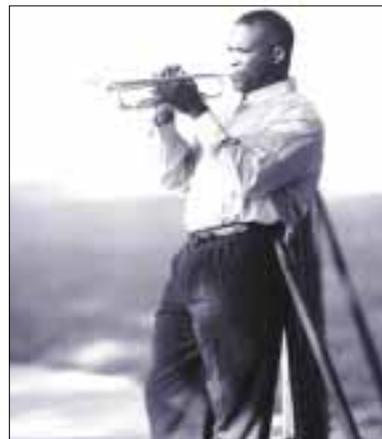
“I felt like it was inevitable that I needed to use that title. That phrase kept popping up in different situations.”

Thematically, philosophically and musically, White challenges his listeners. More than anything, he wants his music to convey sincerity.

“I have no intention of watering down my music so that you can have a nice dinner around it. I’m trying to be as artistic and as creative as possible. It comes out of a lot of my experiences, a lot of listening.”

He mentions trumpeters Woody Shaw and Freddie Hubbard as two of his most profound influences. His hope is to expand on their contributions to the music.

While readily acknowledging his desire to push the musical envelope,



File Photo

Darryl White

White also admits to a more tender side. That side is revealed quite openly on his compositions “Nanpet (The Called of God),” which is dedicated to his wife, Rose, and “Lil I,” named for his son, Isaiah, both from his current CD. Similarly, his debut recording, *Ancient Memories*, contains a memorial to his father called “The Tree Has Fallen... but the roots will live forever” and “Be Sweet,” written for his mother.

“I want people, when they hear the music—since there are no lyrics—I want to convey as much emotion as possible. Some day I think I would like to do a recording session of some of my favorite lullabies and ballads. I think probably my biggest strength is playing in that style. But I also have a more aggressive side,” White said, laughing. His life as a professional player complements his career as a teacher, he said.

“My teaching is so enhanced by my performance experiences. I don’t think I could be an effective teacher if I didn’t have all the tools and experiences to share with my students.”

Already White has plans for future recordings, including a collection of classical pieces. Here’s hoping we hear much, much more from the talented Lincoln-based trumpeter.

Jazz on Disc

Westport Art Ensemble debut busts KC mold

By Tom Ineck



WESTPORT ART ENSEMBLE Westport Art Ensemble

If you think you know what Kansas City jazz sounds like, think again. This is not your grandfather's KC jazz, not the jazz of Count Basie or Jay McShann or Claude Williams. It has little in common with the jump-style blues and riffing horns of traditional Kansas City swing, a style that sounds archaic in today's eclectic jazz world.

That is a good thing. On its debut recording—funded by the **Berman Music Foundation**—the Westport Art Ensemble (wae) points the way to a new synthesis of styles that is both accessible and swinging, while expanding the horizon of rhythmic, harmonic and melodic invention.

Wae is the brainchild of two KC jazz veterans, bassist Gerald Spaits and drummer Todd Strait, and their composing, arranging and playing is notable on this recording. However, it is the younger firebrands here—keyboardist Roger Wilder and especially saxophonist Josh Sclar and guitarist Jake Blanton—who consistently infuse the music with energy and imagination.

Of the 10 compositions, Wilder, Sclar and Blanton each contributed two, with the two elders composing one each. Spaits also did a lovely ballad arrangement of Hank Williams' "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry."

Wilder's "Haenemehr" gets things off to a rousing start, driven by Strait's solid drumming and Sclar's big-toned tenor sax solo. That is followed by Sclar's inventive "Dot of Oz" and Wilder's swirling "Labyrinth Therapy."

Sclar gives "Lonesome" a mournful reading, his lines swaying to the waltz rhythm as though dancing in an empty ballroom. Spaits delivers an exemplary bass solo on his "Worlds Past," a lilting mid-tempo tune.

Strait's beautiful composition, "Lullaby for Naomi," falls midway through the recording. Blanton's outrageous "Almost Hit That Lady" and the eight-minute group improvisation "Art Isn't Always Pretty," were recorded live at the Westport Coffeehouse Theatre, giving the listener a glimpse of contrasting studio and performance styles.

Strait has moved to Oregon, while Sclar and Blanton are looking to the Big Apple for their next musical challenge. If this must be the only product by the Westport Art Ensemble, it will stand the test of time and provide an excellent document of a great Kansas City band.



DARRYL WHITE In the Fullness of Time

Fans of trumpeter Darryl White had to wait three years after his 1999 debut recording, *Ancient Memories*, for the welcomed arrival of this brilliant sophomore effort.

There are no disappointments here. Returning from the first recording are alto saxophonist Dave Pietro, pianist Jeff Jenkins and drummer Matt Houston. Also joining the team are Pete Sommer on tenor sax, bassist Kenny Walker and special guest Art Lande on piano.

The swaggering opener is "Orangewalk Town" by John McNeil, a fellow trumpeter who also produced both of White's recordings. In fact, three of McNeil's compositions are included.

White's challenging "Cronophage" (roughly translated from the Greek, "something that eats time") is a challenging ramble, darting here and there as though in an effort to escape the inevitable timekeeper.

Perhaps most important, White knows the importance of space. He extends the lines of "Nanpet (The Called of God)" into shimmering waves of sound, as though floating on a cloud. Appropriately, the tender tune is dedicated to his wife, Rose. Charles Mingus' "Nostalgia in Times Square" is given a funky backbeat, and the band responds with punchy, soulful statements.

McNeil's "Abercrombie" is a beautiful ensemble piece, followed by another rhythmically challenging White composition "A Cord of 3 Strands." Again showing his tender side, White offers the ballad "Lil I" for his young son, Isaiah. The recurring theme of time boldly reasserts itself in the title track, "In the Fullness of Time."

"Accidents Happen," practically a definition of jazz at its most unpredictable, gets an appropriately intense reading, but the tight ensemble sound and well-constructed solos are no accidents. Lande's "El-Hai-La" is a gentle, almost zen-like dialogue between White on flugelhorn and the composer on piano.

Unsung Hero

Bassist Brown was a legend with a big heart

By Bill Wimmer

Ray Brown, one of the true legends of jazz, died in his sleep July 3, ending one of the greatest and lengthiest careers in music. He was 76.

Brown's role in the history of jazz bass has no living comparison as far as variety, quality and consistency of his playing throughout his life. He would have been viewed as a great historical figure for any one phase or time period in his life, but his quest to grow and stay fresh in the music kept him a vital part of it for over half a century.

Raymond Mather Brown was born in Pittsburgh on Oct., 1926, and was encouraged to pursue piano by his father, who had hopes of him being the next Fats Waller or Art Tatum. Ray was frustrated by the piano and the number of pianists at school, so he turned to the bass when his father couldn't afford a trombone. By the time he was out of high school, Brown was ready to hit the road.

He first toured with Jimmy Hinsley's band, and then with Snookum Russel's group, just after the departure of trumpeter Fats Navarro and trombonist J.J. Johnson. After eight months with the group, at age 19, Brown decided to go to New York.

On Brown's first night in New York, he went down to 52nd Street and saw many of the greatest players in jazz for the first time. When Ray asked his friend, pianist Hank Jones, to introduce him to Dizzy Gillespie, he asked Brown if he wanted a gig and if he could make a rehearsal the next morning at 7. When he arrived at rehearsal, he was shocked to find himself surrounded



File Photo

Ray Brown (center) with bassists John Clayton (left) and Christian McBride

by Dizzy, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell and Max Roach!

Brown went on to play with Gillespie and, later, his big band. In 1946, Brown began an association with Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic groups, often backing singer Ella Fitzgerald. Brown would marry Ella and work with her from 1948 to 1952. In 1951, Brown was one of the original members of The Modern Jazz Quartet, a group that grew out of Gillespie's rhythm section of pianist John Lewis, vibraphonist Milt Jackson, Brown and drummer Kenny Clarke.

The following year, Ray hooked up with pianist Oscar Peterson's trio, where he remained for 14 years, traveling the world first class with one of the most popular groups in jazz. Throughout the years Brown also found time to record with many of the finest musicians, including Cannonball Adderly, Louis Armstrong, Benny Carter, Roy Eldridge, Charlie Parker, Bud

Powell, Sonny Rollins, both Hank and Elvin Jones, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Lester Young, just to name a few.

In 1966, Brown settled in Los Angeles, where along with playing, he began to manage Quincy Jones and The Modern Jazz Quartet. He also founded The L.A. Four around this time, owned a club for a while and freelanced extensively in the studios. I remember seeing him on "The Merv Griffin Show" in the '70s with saxophonist Harold Land and others. Later in that decade, Brown began touring with pianist Cedar Walton and old Gillespie pal Milt Jackson.

In the mid-'80s, Brown started his own trio with pianist Gene Harris and drummer Jeff Hamilton and started touring extensively again. Brown recorded a number of records for Concord Records, and in 1989 signed with the Telarc label, where he would record 19 albums over the last 13 years of his

life. Brown's trio wasn't just a showcase for the leader, but featured some of the major younger voices in jazz like pianist Benny Green, drummer Greg Hutchinson, pianist Geoff Keezer and bassist Karriem Riggins with the much older, but no less enthusiastic, Brown. This group became one of the most respected trios in jazz, with the ability to soothe on a ballad, and come right back and rock you with a hard-hitting blues.

Ray Brown's discography is so extensive it is hard to recommend only a few things in the space allotted, but you could start with the early classic Gillespie sides from 1945, most any of his trio sides with Oscar Peterson and some dates with Jazz at the Philharmonic or Ella Fitzgerald. Some of my own personal favorites are *Something For Lester* on Contemporary, any of the Milt Jackson/Cedar Walton sides on Pablo, *The Red Hot Ray Brown Trio* on Concord and many later Telarc recordings like *Live At Sculler's*. He also can be heard to great advantage on Sonny Rollin's *Way Out West*, on Bill Evan's *Quintessence*, now out on OJC, and James Will-

iams' *Magical Trio 2*.

Ray Brown may have played on some average records, but he never gave an average performance. He was one of those rare individuals who could always find just the right way to place the right notes with just the right amount of feeling to propel the music in so many different settings, from the standard he helped set with the pioneering bebop groups to singers, to trios or small groups and big band work.

He found a way to fit in with a multitude of great players and usually improved the proceedings with his huge tone, perfect intonation and beautiful walking lines. In 1956, the great bassist Oscar Pettiford himself voted Brown the best bassist in jazz.

While Brown was more well known for his solid, driving beat with mainstream groups, I was reminded last year of his incredible versatility with the reissue of Bill Evan's *Quintessence*, a rare group recording by the pianist that features Brown in a very free melodic mode more like Scott La Faro than anything recorded before or since by Brown. Ray was also one of, if not

the greatest bowing bassists in jazz, possessing a beautiful tone, absolute pitch and the ability to make the burly bass sing like a cello. One of the most memorable concerts I've witnessed was highlighted by Ray bowing a solo with his trio that was so gorgeous that it hushed a crowd to complete silence at Half Moon Bay on a sunny Sunday afternoon years ago. Brown's greatest asset wasn't his impeccable technique, though, but the fact that he could use it to communicate pure emotion on his instrument.

It has been a while since Ray's passing, and while much has been written about his accomplishments, a picture has also emerged of a huge-hearted caring, nurturing individual who helped the growth, development and careers of many bassists and other musicians. Ray not only set the standard, but he helped and learned from others as he explored and shared the music along the way. Ray Brown was by all accounts a beautiful human being, and he was able to translate that into music every time he picked up the bass. We'll sure miss you, Ray, and thanks.

Jazz in the venues

Compiled by Tom Ineck

Monday Night Big Band

The Monday Night Big Band plays 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays at P.O. Pears, 322 S. Ninth St. in Lincoln.

The cover is \$4 for adults, \$3 for students.

Thursday Night Jazz

The Thursday Night Jazz Series, featuring small groups, plays 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Thursdays at P.O. Pears, 322 S. Ninth St.

The cover is \$5 for adults, \$4 for students.

For more information on jazz at P.O. Pears, call Arts Incorporated at (402) 477-8008.

Jazz at The Oven

Jazz duos continue on Sunday and Thursday evenings at The Oven, 201 N. Eighth St. For more information, call (402) 475-6118.

Antibalas performed birthday salute to Fela

By Tom Ineck

Until I read Carter Van Pelt's informative review of the Afrobeat recording *Talkatif* (see *Summer/Fall 2002 issue*) by the Brooklyn-based group Antibalas, I was totally unaware of this powerful and talented ensemble.

I had been somewhat prepared for the band's polyrhythmic onslaught by a fondness for drummer Ginger Baker's early 1970s collaborations with Nigerian percussionist Fela Kuti and Africa 70. Therefore, it was with great anticipation that I arrived at the Royal Grove in Lincoln to witness a performance by the 10-piece ensemble. The concert was funded by the **Berman Music Foundation**.

As the fates would have it, the show fell on Oct. 15, the birthday of the late, great Fela, who was



Photo by Rich Hoover

Guitarists Dave Hahn and Luke O'Malley sustain riffs with Duke Amayo.

as well-known for his political outspokenness as his music. The irony did not escape Antibalas, who paid tribute to their greatest influence with a second set comprised wholly of Fela tunes.

The overriding impression of Antibalas on the first-time listener is the hypnotic effect of its powerful brass, guitar and percussion attack. In a way, their repeated lines reminded me of the irresistible blues riffs that were the trademark of early Kansas City swing bands, including the Count Basie Orchestra—the chugging rhythm guitar, the explosive, unison brass statements and the driving rhythm section.

The undulating rhythms, however, are more closely tied to the ancient, exuberant tribal dances of Africa than the lowdown blues of Kansas City in the 1920s and 1930s. The body's nearly irresistible urge is to move against the

beat in sensuous syncopation, and many of those who attended the concert took to the dance floor to do just that.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Saxophonist Martin Perna adds emotional depth.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Trumpeter Gerardo Cox punctuates the music.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Trombonist Aaron Johnson and singer Duke Amayo wail.

Most prominent in the mix was the three-member brass section consisting of trumpeter, trombonist and saxophonist. The baritone sax was especially effective in providing the emotional bleats and blats that set the celebratory

mood. Horn solos were sparse, used primarily to further build the overall momentum of the piece.

Likewise, the presence of two rhythm guitars, bass, keyboards, trap drums, congas and assorted percussion created an overwhelming pulse. At times, the haunting, otherworldly sounds emanating from the Farfisa organ were reminiscent of the late Sun Ra and his so-called Intergalactic Arkestra.

In fact, the instrumental bar-

rage at times almost obscured the vocals, many of which contained pointed and timely political statements, especially on the compositions “War Is a Crime” and “Colonial Mentality.” One tune seemed to fade seamlessly into the next, making it difficult to differentiate between them and creating for the listener a distinct sense of floating on the rhythms. And, what an exhilarating sensation it was!



Photo by Rich Hoover

Bassist Del Stribling and drummer Phil Ballman keep a rock-steady rhythm.

NJO continues strong season lineup

By Tom Ineck

The Nebraska Jazz Orchestra continues a strong season lineup with returning favorites and new guests appearing in March and May.

On March 25, saxophone great **Don Menza** fronts the NJO again, this time accompanied by another outstanding tenor player, **Pete Christlieb**, in a program showcasing these two “Tenor Titans.”

Tony Gulizia, a longtime favorite in his hometown of Omaha and throughout the Midwest, is the special guest soloist May 6. A wonderful keyboard player and an equally talented crooner who now resides in Colorado, Gulizia will help the NJO present a program “Remembering Sinatra and Basie.”

Also scheduled May 6 is a guest appearance by the winner of this

year’s NJO Young Jazz Artist Competition.

All concerts are held at the Cornhusker Hotel in downtown Lincoln. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. with priority seating for season members beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for each concert, \$15 for seniors and \$6 for students.

Charlie Burton and friends gather for special night at the Zoo Bar

By Butch Berman

Charlie Burton and I go back a long way. Sometimes bickering like feuding brothers and other times like... brothers. Two Jew boys with a fierce reverence for the roots music that we have played together and separately for more than half of our lives. Charlie, a top composer and exciting performer, and myself, a guitarist/arranger, enjoy the sum of the parts of our craft. These days, I'm not a regular with Charlie Burton's band, but after years with The Megatones and Charlie Burton and Rock Therapy, etc., it's still a gas even being the second-call guitar guy. This evening last October at the Zoo bar was special, with a rare collection of Lincoln's "old-timers" backing Charlie and calling themselves Snakehead Fish. Dig this—fiddlin' Dr. Dave Fowler, steel guitarist Steve "Fuzzy" Blazek, Cutouts and Shithook rhythm section with the Daves—bassist Boye and drummer Robel—moi on guitar and, of course, Charlie. What a night! What a band! What a blast!



Dave Fowler



Butch Berman



Steve Blazek

Photos by Rich Hoover



Charlie Burton



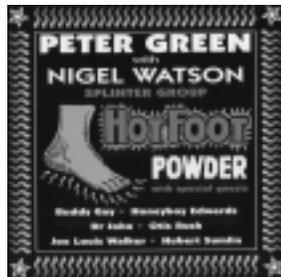
Dave Robel (left) and Dave Boye



Charlie Burton and friends are (from left) Butch Berman, Dave Fowler, Charlie, Dave Boye and Steve Blazek.

*Blues on Disc***Brits bring artistry to Robert Johnson**

By Rich Hoover

**PETER GREEN & NIGEL WATSON****Hot Foot Powder
Snapper Music**

If you like the blues of Robert Johnson, as do thousands of musicians and millions of fans, then you need to check out *Hot Foot Powder*, the superlative production of guitarist Peter Green and lead guitarist Nigel Watson, released in 2000.

This is the second in a series of three collaborations. The first is the '98 release *The Robert Johnson Songbook*, with a collection of 14 tunes. The third, released in '02 is *Robert Johnson Favorites*, which is a collection of the faves of the first two releases.

In addition to Peter and Nigel are Splinter Group, which includes Roger Cotton on guitar and piano, Pete Stroud on upright bass, Larry Tolfree on drums, Brian Bull on guitar and an enviable cast of guest instrumentalists including Dr. John, piano; and Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Hubert Sumlin, Honey Boy Edwards and Joe Louis Walker, guitars.

The tunes on this CD are "I'm a Steady Rollin' Man," "From Four Until Late," "Dead Shrimp Blues," "Little Queen of Spades," "They're Red Hot," "Preachin' Blues," "Hellhound On My Trail," "Travelin'

Riverside Blues," "Malted Milk," "Milkcow's Calf Blues," "Drunken Hearted Man," "Crossroad Blues," and "Come On In My Kitchen."

It is probably impossible to expand or improve on the volumes written about Robert Johnson, but Peter Green and Nigel Watson have interpreted Mr. Johnson in the highest degree of artistry.

For more details, visit the website: www.snappermusic.com/petergreen

**KIM WILSON
Smokin' Joint
M.C. Records**

It's art, I tell ya'.

Smokin' Joint is a masterful live recording with top-drawer musicians demonstrating the artistry of individual talents plus the ability to meld themselves together to form the gambit of power of emotion, prowess in communication and the sense of timing that makes the package greater than the sum of its parts.

The tunes were recorded at The Rhythm Room in Phoenix in 1999 and Café Boogaloo in Hermosa Beach, Calif., in 2000. The artists are Kim Wilson, vocals, harmonica and lyrics on four tunes (He is deeply entrenched as one of the iconic pillars of blues culture); Larry Taylor, a rock-solid walkin' bass man; Richard Innes,

drummer with blues and shuffle deep in his heart; guitarists Rusty Zinn and Billy Flynn at The Rhythm Room and guitarists Kirk Fletcher and Troy Gonyea at Café Boogaloo. These guitar gentlemen have the knowledge, experience and abilities to pour out an endless stream of musical joys. Mark Stevens is a relative newcomer whose talents on keyboards justifiably perked Kim Wilson's ears.

It's a blues entertainment package you can open time after time. For more details, visit the website: www.mc-records.com

*Connected***Artists online**

To learn more about some of the artists mentioned in this issue of *Jazz*, visit the following websites:

Sheila Jordan

www.sheilajordanjazz.com

Cameron Brown

www.jazzhalo.com/brown

Doug Talley

www.geocities.com/doug_talley

Ivan Paduart

www.ivanpaduart.com

Phil Woods

www.philwoods.com

Ray Brown

www.hopper-management.com/ray_brown

Antibalas

www.antibalas.com/pages/index2

Charlie Burton

www.bulldogrecords.com/burton

www.nebrocks.org/burton

www.lazysob.com/artists/charlieburton

www.musicaustin.com/country/cburton

www.timmcmahan.com/burton

www.randysrodeo.com/austin/burton

Letters to the editor

Photographer has kudos all around

Thank you so much for the great article (*Summer/Fall 2002*) in your newsletter—what an honor!

What a terrific newsletter—very high quality and easy to read. Butch, a very nice gift from you to the jazz community! Tom, you're an excellent interviewer and writer and quite a good photographer, I notice!

My compliments also to Rich Hoover on his photos. Thanks again!

Bev Rehkop
Prairie Village, Kan.

Former NJO musician has fond memories

I just received my first copy of your newsletter, the Summer/Fall 2002 issue. I lived in Lincoln, Nebraska, from April 1975 until May 1977, and I played trombone with the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra during those formative years when John Tavlin was getting the band organized.

Great times... great musicians... and lots of fun.

Dick Sharpe
Louisville, Ken.

KC transplant yearns for jazz news and Sons of Brasil

Somehow I have gotten on your mailing list (thankfully!) and I promise to join, send money, stamps, whatever if you promise to keep me on your list. Since coming to Lincoln from Kansas City in 1997, I have been struck by the lack of info on coming events and musicians in the area and I really appreciate getting your newsletter! With your mailing, I can finally make some plans to hear some great music. Mostly, I read reviews in the Journal Star of what happened yesterday, but that's not the real reason for my note to you—only a general whine.

I missed (see?) hearing Stan Kessler when he was here for Jazz in June as part of Sons of Brasil. I am thoroughly smitten with Cuban and Brazilian music right now and would love to find a CD of the Sons of Brasil if one is available. I remember Stan when he was with the Youth Symphony in Kansas City in the '60s (can you believe it?) and heard him play from time to time with the Flat Five—what a long time ago. I have searched the Internet for a Sons of Brasil recording and fine none. Can you tell

me if they have any recordings or will I have to wait?

Further, when can we expect to see Norman Hedman again?

Thanks in advance for any help you can give me. Again, I really appreciate your newsletter and the work you are doing. Don't quit.

Lynn Bowes
Lincoln, Neb.

Editor's Note: The Sons of Brasil do have a CD, available at most record outlets in the Kansas City area. Read the Prez Sez column on page 2 for more on Norman Hedman's next Lincoln appearance.

Saxophonist Talley grateful to BMF

Thanks again for your wonderful hospitality. We had a great time in Lincoln, and Omaha went well, too. Thanks for your invitation for a return engagement. Maybe we can put something together for next school year or maybe fall '04. Be sure to let me know when you plan to come to KC.

Doug Talley
Kansas City, Mo.

Webcasting

Jazz radio streams on the Internet

WBGO (Newark, N.J.)

<http://www.wbgo.org/>

WBGO is America's premier jazz radio station serving the jazz capital of the world, the New York and New Jersey metropolitan area.

Jazz at Lincoln Center

<http://www.jazzradio.org/>

Jazz on the Web

<http://www.jazzradio.net/>

WWOZ (New Orleans)

<http://www.wwoz.org/>

WWOZ is a listener-supported, volunteer-operated radio station in New Orleans. Its broadcast signal reaches the entire metro New

Orleans area and beyond. Playing blues, jazz, Cajun, zydeco, gospel, Brazilian, Caribbean and a whole lot more, WWOZ keeps the music and musical heritage of the Crescent City alive.

KKJZ (Long Beach, Calif.)

<http://www.kkjz.org/>



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A Majestic evening in Kansas City



Courtesy of The Majestic

Gathering at The Majestic steakhouse in Kansas City, Mo., are (from left) John Jessup and friend, Grace Gandu and Butch Berman, Ahmad Alaadeen and manager Fanny Dunfee, and Jo Boehr and Steve Irwin.

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 is needed to help offset the costs of this newsletter and its programs.

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