



Courtesy Photo

Jerry Hahn

Hometown guitar hero Hahn returns to acclaim

By Tom Ineck

Jazz guitarist Jerry Hahn has come full circle.

Born Sept. 21, 1940, in Alma, Neb., Hahn grew up in Wichita, Kan., but his early musical talent and ambition took him far from home. He recorded and toured with saxophonist John Handy, vibraphonist Gary Burton, saxophonist Bennie Wallace and many others over the years, but earlier this year he returned to Wichita to be near his children and grandchildren. At age 64, he says he made the right decision.

"It definitely feels like home," Hahn said in a recent phone interview. "When I used to visit, it didn't feel like home. But now that I'm living here, it's just been great."

Hahn has a new solo guitar recording on Bop Wire Records, and he recently packed the house for a trio engagement at the Blue Room in Kansas City, Mo. He will visit Lincoln, Neb., for workshops Feb. 22-23 and a trio concert Feb. 24 at P.O. Pears, co-sponsored by the **Berman Music Foundation** and Dietze Music House. He will be accompanied by KC veterans Gerald Spaits on bass

and Tommy Ruskin on drums.

While still in grade school in Wichita, Hahn seemed destined for bigger things. At age 7, he was taking lessons on a lap steel guitar that belonged to his family, and soon he proved a natural on the instrument. Largely self-taught, he turned to the more conventional six-string guitar.

"There was always a guitar hanging around, and I just picked it up on my own and started playing it," he said. "My teacher's son also played steel, and he had a band. I joined the band when I was 11, playing a regular guitar."

A western swing outfit, the Bobby Wiley Rhythmaires toured small-town Kansas and played live every day on KEDD, Wichita's first TV station, a common practice in that medium's infancy. Hahn began playing rhythm guitar, but switched to lead after the other guitarist quit.

"I just picked things up, as I went along," he said. He names Barney Kessel as an early influence, along with Howard Roberts, Johnny Smith and Tal Farlow. After several years

Jerry Hahn continued on page 5

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In this issue of *Jazz*...

Prez Sez.....	2
Tomfoolery: Jerry Hahn.....	6
Russ Long Trio Review.....	7
Doug Talley Quartet Review.....	8
Dan Thomas Quintet Review.....	9
Marian McPartland Review.....	10
Roy Haynes Quartet Review.....	11
Scheps-Brock Quintet Review.....	12
"Boy Wonder" Toby Memorial.....	13
San Francisco Jazz Fest Review.....	14
Preservation Hall/BeauSoleil Review.....	15
Teraesa Vinson Interview.....	16
Teraesa Vinson CD Review.....	17
Jazz on Disc.....	18
Discorama.....	21
2005 Topeka Jazz Festival.....	23

Prez Sez Jazz in June takes new direction without BMF

By Butch Berman

Dear Readers...Happy Holidays to you all!

I hate to start my letter, especially during the holiday season, with negative news, but the truth is the truth. I just received a call from the new head of the Jazz in June committee, Ted Eschliman, with the news that the Berman Music Foundation won't be needed next year in booking the talent for the annual festival.

In the several years I've been involved in creating some positive momentum to take this affair to loftier places, I've always seemed to butt heads with someone. It wasn't until last year that, under the helm of Doug Campbell, I felt they finally had someone on board who understood the music, the musicians and the bigger picture. We went from a mostly local and regional concert series to a very cultural festival, featuring top name artists from coast to coast. You could feel the trend of the audience change from just a free event to attract mom and pop and the kids to a huge throng of folks who were beginning to embrace and listen to jazz with different ears.

Even under Doug's astute leadership, frustrations prevailed, and he chose to split rather than put up with all the non-jazz nonsense. Nevertheless, I understood that for next year former Nebraskan and top-notch New York City session drummer Victor Lewis and vocalist/pianist Valerie Capers and her band were in contention, as they and trumpeter Ingrid Jensen were approved for 2004. Ingrid got the nod, and I was told it was OK to contact the others. Also, it was agreed that the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra (NJO) wouldn't be back on the roster again for a couple of years as they play so often in the area.



Doug Campbell and Butch Berman

Since then, local lawyer and chairman of the Nebraska Art Association Bob Nefsky was chosen to select a new head honcho to replace Campbell, and Eschliman was it. Last year, Ted and I worked together very well, as he became a much-needed liaison between me and the rest of the committee.

By this year things changed, when I discovered they held a meeting that discussed my involvement without me present. It seems that even though last year was the best-attended festival ever, they still were in the red to the tune of about \$1,000. They couldn't attract all the corporate sponsorship they required, even though last year was a major success. So I got the call from Ted that our services wouldn't be needed, with no opportunity to be there and discuss it.

They plan to have the NJO back again in 2005 and decided to scale down the festival and utilize more entertainers closer to home, turning Jazz in June into a less-than-stellar attraction, with the exception of Alaadeen and Group 21 who were hired through a grant from

the Mid-America Arts Alliance.

Saddened, angry and disappointed after years of donating time, money and hours of free promotion from our foundation and *Jazz* newsletter. I had to concede, knowing that if anything, their insensitivity in dealing with all the ramifications was one of the major issues, and that the momentum we started can't be recreated at will. It seems that their interest in logos, T-shirts and hats meant more than the music. Maybe they should rename it T-shirts in June. When egos get involved, no one suffers more than the community that has no say in the matter.

I know there's more to this than meets the eye, and that politics probably played a big hand in it. But it's a shame that our special gifts to the community can't be received in the same manner that they are given and that individual factions involved in the arts can't come together to benefit a greater cause, the healing power of music.

Speaking of music, since I last reported to you Grace and I have been fortunate to hear some great sounds: Bob Dylan and Willie Nelson at the Lincoln Saltdogs baseball park were a gas, especially if you were in the mob of fans packed in front of the stage. Willie was predictably entertaining, but Bob was stunning as he and his raging band rocked their asses off. Due to hand problems, Dylan played only the electric piano, but it didn't matter. Forever young, forever fabulous!

We covered country by catching the two great Williamses performing today. Old timer Don Williams touched everyone's heart at Blackjack's Underground in the basement of Pershing Municipal Auditorium in downtown Lincoln. He proved to all present that he's



Ted Eschliman

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Butch Berman



Photo by Butch Berman

Kathleen Holeman and bassist Bob Brandstetter at The Club in Plaza 3

one of the best singer-songwriter-storytellers in country music today. The other Williams, as in Lucinda, is the cutting-edge top female performer out there today, as she mesmerized the overfill crowd at KC's Beaumont Club in Westport.



Photo by Butch Berman

Paul Smith

While in KCMO, we got to hear a preview of the lone female jazz songstress I booked for the 2005 Topeka Jazz Festival, Memorial Day weekend in Kansas. I'm referring to Kathleen Holeman, who turned in a sweet set at the always grand The Club at Plaza 3 in the Country Club Plaza. She was backed on piano by one of my faves, Paul Smith, and the rest of her admirable band. She is lovely to look at, has decent pipes, and the always wonderful food and service provided by Derald Kirklin and his staff made an evening with Holeman and the Plaza 3 a must anytime. Thanks to all for making a nice evening out for Grace, her sister, Lois Sankey, visiting from Nigeria, and me.

More fun to be had in KC was provided by my old pal, Ginney Coleman. Along with her long-time partner, Ruth Rhoden, they host "Just Jazz," a fine weekly jazz program broadcast 2-4 p.m.

Sundays on K C U R - F M 89.3. Ginney's always nice enough to let me plug what I'm up to, this time the ongoing Berman Jazz Series, and the upcoming Topeka Jazz Festival. (See Tom Ineck's complete coverage of the Berman Jazz Series shows featuring the Dan Thomas Quintet, the Doug Talley Quartet and the Russ Long Trio in this issue.)



Photo by Butch Berman

Derald Kirklin, manager of Plaza III

Special guest, saxophonist Dan Thomas, prepared us for his appearance as our debut artist at the Berman series, held in the lower level of the beautiful Topeka Performing Arts Center (TPAC) at 214 SE Eighth St.

We also got to do a "greet and meet" at famed KC drummer Tommy Ruskin's Saturday jazz jam at Jardine's, at 4536 Main St. A wide variety of talented folks got to perform, including the excellent vocalist Gary Gardner, as well as Tommy helping me promote the BMF and Topeka's important jazz stuff. Thanks again, Tommy.

Other fab moments on our end-of-summer-and-fall entertainment schedule were two swell nights at the

Prez Sez continued on page 4



Photo by Grace Sankey Berman

Butch Berman and Ginney Coleman meet to chat about Berman Jazz Series.



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Consultants: Grace Sankey Berman, Russ Dantzler, Dan Demuth, Norman Hedman, Gerald Spaits, Leslie Spaits and Wade Wright

Prez Sez continued from page 3

stately Lied Center for Performing Arts, featuring the brilliant comic Jerry Seinfeld, followed by the remarkable grand dame of jazz and radio fame...Marian McPartland. Thanks to her bassist, Jim Cox of Chicago, whom I got to know when he came to Jazz in June two summers ago behind my old buddy jazz mandolinist Don Stiernberg, I got to go backstage and meet her. (Pix and story are included in this issue.)

The ultimate thrill of them all, however, was a marvelous 2½-hour concert at the new Quest Center in Omaha with the one and only Divine Miss M. Bette Midler, an icon babe if I've ever seen one, just tore the place apart, giving one of the most enjoyable concerts I have ever witnessed.

Using modern technology, old- and new-school song and dance routines, and some of the most hilarious, bawdy and topical comedy you could imagine, Bette put on a four-alarm, five-star performance of a lifetime. BRAVO!!!

Now, back to jazz. Rob Scheps and Zach Brock brought their swinging, ever-emoting and exciting show back to P.O. Pears Oct. 21. Pears didn't have its act together this trip, as its PA system was down. Rob, the great saxist



Butch meets Marian McPartland backstage at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln.

he is, prevailed as always to rule the roost. Everybody cooked and, for my money, his drummer, Morgan Childs of Vancouver, B.C., is the next Billy Kilson. Monster power, yet sensitive and clever. Keep an eye on this guy. The turnout was small, probably due the baseball playoffs, but the standing "O" at the end of the night was well deserved.

Our next show at P.O. Pears will be Thursday Feb. 17, as we are ever-so-lucky to be able to bring in the legendary guitarist of guitarists, Jerry Hahn. (Tom will convey the rest of the story about him elsewhere in this issue). My good friend and hard-working BMF consultant KC bassist Gerald Spaits called me to say Jerry Hahn was back in Wichita, Kan., and wanted to gig more in the area. WOW! So we

put together the Pears gig with Gerald and drummer Tommy Ruskin to create the trio. Jerry also will do one, and possibly two, guitar clinics at our local music store, Dietze Music House. Call (402) 476-6644 and ask Ted for complete details. Oughtta be a gasser.

Following every Berman Jazz Series show in Topeka, Kan., we meet the next morning to continue preparation for our Topeka Jazz Festival, held every Memorial Day weekend at the fantastic TPAC. Check out the ads in our *Jazz* newsletters, the *KC JAM* magazine, or our websites to get tickets for this annual not-to-be-missed event. In my first year as artistic director, I feel I've put together a balanced, blockbuster array of diversified jazz talent to please all tastes. For more info, call me at (402) 476-3112 or Mark in Topeka at (785) 234-2787.

In closing, I want to publicly thank Tony Moreno, Kendra Shank's incredible drummer, who charmed us all at the 2004 Jazz in June. I told him how much I loved his craft and asked whom else he had worked with. Turns out...tons of great stuff, as he's so in demand. He sent me a sampler of three CDs he played on in 2003. Because they were released awhile back, I didn't review them in my Discorama column, but I highly recommend them all to you. They are "Global Motion," by Marc Mommaas on SSc 1119 (visit www.mommaas.com), "Prayer," by Dave Phillips & Freedance on Sound Street Records CD 001 (visit www.davephillips.info) and "Resistance," by the Friedrich Hebert Moreno Trio Vol. 3 on Schoener Horen music (visit www.juergenfriedrich.net).

Well, there you go. Enuff said, huh? Only this remains...Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Pray for peace,

Butch Berman



TPAC and BMF reps meet to discuss Topeka Jazz Festival. Front row (from left) are John Esau, development director; Mike Woodruff, operations assistant; Melanie Kitchner, marketing manager; Rob Seitz, executive director; and Mark Radziejewski, assistant director. Back row (from left) are Sarah Kratzer, finance manager; April Evans, box office manager; Pam Hatfield, executive assistant; Christy Bien, receptionist; and Grace Sankey Berman, Butch Berman and Tony Rager of the Berman Music Foundation..

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Grace Sankey Berman

Jerry Hahn continued from page 1

with the Rhythmaires, he began appearing in area jazz clubs. Still just 16, he lied about his age in order to get hired. The balance between his professional life and his formal education was tenuous.

“When I was going to high school, I was working a gig where I was working five hours a night five nights a week,” he recalled. “I’d get four hours of sleep after the gig and four hours between school and the gig.” Understanding his desire to be a musician and seeing his apparent musical talent, his folks didn’t object.

“They just let me do it. That’s what I wanted to do. Of course, my school work wasn’t that great. I just made sure I was taking pretty easy classes. If I didn’t get my work done in school, it just didn’t get done.”

Work was plentiful, but Hahn yearned for something more. At 21, he and his new bride headed for San Francisco, a musical hotbed that he called home throughout the exciting ‘60s. He played at some of the legendary rock venues such as the Fillmore, but more frequently at jazz clubs like the Blackhawk, The Jazz Workshop and the El Matador.

Within two years of his arrival, Hahn had joined the trail-blazing John Handy Quintet alongside violinist Michael White, bassist Don Thompson and drummer Terry Clarke. The band scored a hit with its live recording at the 1965 Monterey Jazz Festival, and followed up with a brilliant 1966 studio recording. It was a breakthrough experience for Hahn.

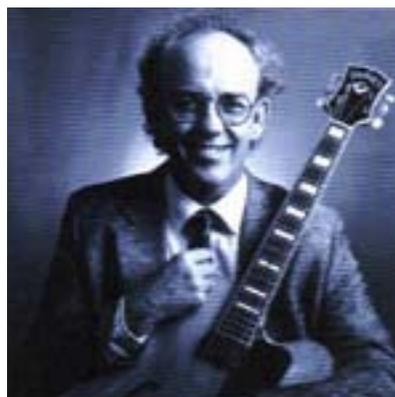
“It was fantastic. I started working with a group that went on to enjoy

some real success and record a couple of albums for Columbia. That was the first band that I was ever in that got national recognition.”

Hahn’s debut as leader was a 1967 session called “Ara-Be-In,” with violinist Michael White, saxophonist Noel Jewkes, bassist Ron McClure and drummer Jack DeJohnette. He toured with the Fifth Dimension in 1968, and in 1968-‘69 recorded three LPs with vibraphonist Gary Burton (“Country Roads,” “Throb” and “Good Vibes”).

In 1970, he launched the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood, an eclectic quartet with Mike Finnigan on Hammond B-3 organ and vocals, Mel Graves on bass and George Marsh on drums. The Brotherhood released a promising debut on Columbia and toured behind it to great acclaim. Before the term “jazz-rock fusion” was coined, Hahn and his colleagues already were practicing it.

“I had a trio with George Marsh and Mel Graves, and we were all jazz players, but we had some other influences. We had some rock influences, also. But then we brought in Mike Finnigan, who played B-3 and just sang great.” Finnigan, who had been living in Wichita since the early 1960s, moved to San Francisco at Hahn’s behest, bringing with him material written by former bandmate Lane Tietgen that had never been recorded.



Jerry Hahn at the time of his 1995 release “Time Changes”

“It was just a combination of this expert, seasoned jazz musicianship along with this great-sounding Mike Finnigan voice with this great material and Mike playing Hammond B-3 organ. We thought we’d just throw all that stuff together and stir it up and see what came out!” Hahn readily acknowledges the band’s contribution to contemporary music, noting that German jazz authority Joachim Berendt described the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood as one of the “trailblazers of rock-jazz integration.”

“Miles (Davis) gets most of the credit, but we were right there beside Miles at the exact same time,” Hahn said. “It was the same type of a thing. We were borrowing from all different kinds of influences and styles and putting them into another context, and had a unique sound.”

But, as with so many great ideas, the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood lasted only a year. The rigors of the road took their toll, but Hahn blames something more insidious for the band’s premature demise.

“The reason why that band didn’t stick together was our management was crooked. I knew this, and I wanted to change, but I couldn’t get an agreement with everybody else. So, I left and the band broke up, and then everybody found out I was right.” Columbia allowed the band’s sole recording to go out of print, and the company retains ownership of this valuable collector’s item.

“I’ve actually talked to them, trying to buy it, but they don’t want to give it up,” Hahn said. “They still have all the masters stored somewhere up in New York.”

After the breakup of the Brotherhood, Hahn returned to Wichita, where he founded the guitar program and taught for 15 years at Wichita State University. He also began writing a regular column for *Guitar Player*

Continued on page 6



Jerry Hahn & His Quintet released “Ara-Be-In” in 1967.

Photo by Chris Strachwitz

File Photo

Jerry Hahn continued from page 5
 magazine that led to a jazz guitar method book published by Mel Bay.

Anxious to play fulltime again, he moved to Portland, Ore., where he plied his craft for seven years before relocating to Denver in 1993. Later that year he recorded “Time Changes” for Enja, his first release in 20 years. It featured bassist Steve LaSpina and drummer Jeff Hirshfield and guest appearances by saxophonist David Liebman and pianists Phil Markowitz and Art Lande. He also performed and recorded with legendary drummer Ginger Baker, who was

raising polo ponies on a ranch 30 miles from Denver.

He soon returned to the Pacific Northwest to start a jazz guitar program at Portland State University, where he stayed for eight years. Earlier this year, he decided to come back to his hometown, where he is close to family and is finding ample employment playing in area clubs.

“The one thing I like about Wichita is I’m working with the same guys all the time,” he said with a tone of amazement in his voice. “I’ve got five steady gigs here. I’ve got a steady working trio every Friday and

Saturday night, I do a solo on Thursdays and I’m working with another band on Wednesdays and another duo on Mondays.”

It helps that Hahn’s reputation preceded him, a case of “hometown boy makes good.”

“When I came back, it’s like the city opened up its arms to me. I’m doing a little teaching, but not much, and I like that just fine. I like the idea that I’m playing all the time, and whenever I go out of town my chops are together.”

No doubt Hahn’s chops will be in fine fettle Feb. 24 in Lincoln.

Tomfoolery

Brotherhood had lasting impact on listeners

By Tom Ineck

An hour-long interview with guitarist Jerry Hahn for a story in this issue of Jazz has sparked a few memories of my first encounter with Hahn’s wonderful musicianship. Please indulge me as I reminisce.

It was the summer of 1970. A guitar-playing friend, Mike Barton, and I had just graduated from high school in Lincoln, Neb., and we were anxious to see the world, or at least another state. We headed to Colorado, where we hitch-hiked from Boulder to Denver and back again, eventually getting arrested and jailed for sleeping in a post office lobby one chilly night on the edge of Boulder.

While in Denver, we learned of a concert featuring English guitar rocker Terry Reid’s band. Neither Hahn nor I can remember the name of the venue, but I think it was a renovated roller rink with huge stained-glass windows! Opening for Reid was the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood, a now-legendary fusion quartet that recorded one album for Columbia Records, and then quickly faded from view after a few months of touring.

Mike and I were very rock-ori-

ented, though we had been introduced to a little jazz by our late teens. But nothing had prepared us for the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood and its exciting marriage of jazz

technique with the soulful vocals and Hammond B-3 of Mike Finnigan. As Hahn explains in the interview story above, he and bassist Mel Graves and drummer George Marsh were steeped in jazz, but also brought other influences to the band. With Finnigan’s rock and rhythm ‘n’ blues contributions, they created a new equation, an early example of jazz-rock.

The Brotherhood’s Denver show knocked our socks off, making the Reid performance anti-climactic. All of the guys in the band had long hair and wild clothes, not at all conforming to the stereotypical appearance of jazz musicians. Hahn, Graves and Marsh were stretching the music to bold new places, while Finnigan an-



Jerry Hahn
 circa 1970

File Photo

chored the band from the Hammond organ.

We later caught Reid in a daylong outdoor festival near Boulder, headlining with a local band called Zephyr, featuring a young guitar firebrand by the name of Tommy Bolin. But it was the genre-busting sounds of the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood that I remember best. According to Hahn, another teenager was in the audience that night hearing Hahn for the first time, and the experience would have a profound influence on him. It was Denver native Bill Frisell, today a popular and prolific jazz guitarist whose fusion style owes much to Hahn.

My friend Mike Barton went on to play guitar in numerous rock, country and western swing bands in Lincoln and Austin, Texas. He was best man when I wed in 1977, but he’s gone now—taken by a heart malfunction at age 25 in 1978. Thanks in part to the Jerry Hahn Brotherhood, those younger, wilder days—on our own, far from home, and hungry for new experiences—still survive him in my failing memory.

Berman Jazz Series**Russ Long Trio puts audience at ease**

By Tom Ineck

TOPEKA, Kan.—The Nov. 14 edition of the Berman Jazz Series was the perfect convergence of an intimate setting, a compatible trio of longtime friends and colleagues, a familiar repertoire played with a relaxed swing, and a warmly responsive audience.



Russ Long

From the opener, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "We Kiss in a Shadow," listeners were reminded what makes pianist Russ Long so popular on the Kansas City jazz scene. His fleet-fingered, light touch and relaxed melodic approach immediately put the audience at ease, like settling into a beloved uncle's parlor for a Sunday afternoon chat, perhaps with a snifter of something to sip.

Gershwin's "Fascinatin' Rhythm" received its usual lively reading, with Long and bassist Gerald Spaits taking the melody line in unison and drummer Ray DeMarchi taking a spirited solo with brushes. The three-way chemistry that has contributed to the trio's longevity (performing together since 1982) was immediately evident.

Long revealed his stylistic debt to Mose Allison on the bluesy "Fool's Paradise," which Allison recorded in 1960. Long delivered the lyric with wit and a sense of world-weary wisdom, embellishing the melody with right-hand trills. DeMarchi switched to mallets for the exotic "Poinciana," made popular by Ahmad Jamal in the late 1950s. Spaits held down the intricate bass line with poise and precision as Long explored melodic variations.

"You Came a Long Way from St. Louis," was delivered with a rumba beat



Ray DeMarchi

and the tongue-in-cheek irony of a longtime Missouri resident. On "All of You," however, Long proved himself just as capable with a serious ballad, phrasing the lyric with a natural, conversational quality and more than making up in emotion what he lacks in vocal pyrotechnics.

Spaits was featured on "Don't You Go Away Mad," a beautiful minor-key instrumental with DeMarchi adding to the impact with skillful brush work. Long paid tribute to Anita O'Day with a nice rendition of "Whatever Happened to You?" Bud Powell's difficult, Spanish-tinged "Un Poco Loco" completed the first set with its sudden stops and starts and an outstanding drum solo that included a flourish on timbales.

Long opened the second set with a brief, but gorgeous solo take of the Rodgers and Hart standard "It Never Entered My Mind." Moving uptempo, the trio attacked "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," with DeMarchi delivering an inspired drum solo that incorporated



Gerald Spaits

cymbals and hand-drumming on the snare. Long reclaimed his own composition, "Save That Time," a lovely ballad that has been admirably covered by singers Karrin Allyson, Kevin Mahogany and Joe Williams.

False expectations and outright fantasies are the subject of the hilarious blues "It Was a Dream," with Long lending just the right degree of sarcasm to the refrain. Gershwin returned with the trio's interpretation of "The Man I Love," featuring Long deftly duplicating Spaits' bass line. Again, DeMarchi showed his skill on brushes.

Spaits and DeMarchi traded four-bar breaks and Long nailed the lyric on the uptempo "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To." The title track from Long's CD "Never Let Me Go" again displayed his more tender side as his voice nearly cracked with vulnerability. By contrast, he returned to the lighter side with the bluesy uptempo "Kidney Stew," a popular tune from his tenure with Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson. Throughout the two-hour performance, Long's wit frequently bubbled to the surface, in his choice of tunes and in his repartee with the audience.

The ballad "Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere" served as the concert's apt closer, as it does on the CD. The audience of 30 in the lounge-style setting of the Hussey Playhouse in the lower level of the Topeka Performing Arts Center showed its appreciation with a standing ovation.

The Berman Jazz Series continues with performances by Luqman Hamza and Lucky Wesley on Feb. 13 and by pianist George Cables on March 13. All concerts begin at 3 p.m. in the lower level of the Topeka Performing Arts Center.

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Photo by Rich Hoover

Berman Jazz Series**Doug Talley Quartet exhibits mutual comfort level***By Tom Ineck*

TOPEKA, Kan.—Given the tough economics of jazz performance and recording, musicians seldom have the opportunity to grow together over a period of several years. The Doug Talley Quartet, formed in 1995, is the exception that proves the rule.

Over nearly a decade of concert and studio collaborations, saxophonist Talley and his Kansas City-based cohorts—pianist Wayne Hawkins, bassist Tim Brewer and drummer Keith Kavanaugh—have honed their composing and instrumental skills to a fine edge. They make frequent appearances throughout the Midwest and have produced three CDs, with another planned for next spring. Their mutual comfort level was especially evident during a performance Oct. 24 at the Topeka Performing Arts Center (TPAC), the second concert in the Berman Jazz Series.

Drawing much of their material from the Cole Porter tribute “Night and Day: Musings on the Cole Porter Songbook,” the band sensitively played to an audience familiar with the standards. The band’s interpretations of Porter, however, are anything but traditional or predictable. Listeners were alerted to the difference with the opening title track, which uses an effective stop-time and release motif, setting up solos for bass, piano and tenor sax, as well as a series of drum breaks.

Kavanaugh’s arrangement of “What Is This Thing Called Love?” was set in the unusual 7/4 time and included an infectious sax and walking bass. Unlike its conventional ballad exposition, “Autumn Leaves” was taken at a fast clip, embellished with an outstanding keyboard solo by Hawkins and tenor statements that included a wry quote from Gershwin’s “Fascinatin’ Rhythm.”



Photo by Rich Hoover

The Doug Talley Quartet is (from left) Wayne Hawkins, Doug Talley, Tim Brewer and Keith Kavanaugh.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Doug Talley and Tim Brewer

Brewer contributed “For John,” a merry, dancing tune written for his son. Not content to remain a waltz, it subtly shifted as Brewer and Hawkins chimed in with solos. Porter’s “Love for Sale” opened with a playful, irreverent duo from Talley and Hawkins before settling into a tenor lead line, another inspired solo by Hawkins and a piercing sax solo. “It’s All Right with Me” went uptempo and was highlighted by a Hawkins solo that cleverly interpolated “The Surrey with the Fringe on Top.”

The second set was largely a showcase for the band’s original compositions, both old and new. Talley switched to soprano sax for the new tune, “Harry Fox,” named for the notorious music licensing and collection

agency. With the high-pitched horn, stop-time and a percussive piano solo, the band created an edgy feel. The Latin-tinged “Plaza Lights,” from the quartet’s “Kansas City Suite” CD, celebrated the Spanish architecture and festive holiday illumination of KC’s landmark Country Club Plaza district.

Ellington’s “In a Sentimental Mood” received the most faithful rendition of the afternoon, a lush ballad treatment featuring Talley’s tenor. There was no mistaking the inspiration for “1600 E. 18th St.,” a swinging bop tune with echoes of the 18th and Vine Street District where Count Basie, Lester Young, Charlie Parker and others cut their musical teeth during the notorious Pendergast Era. This Talley tribute also is drawn from “Kansas City Suite.”

The quartet played a breezy 8/4 tune from their recently commissioned soundtrack for Alfred Hitchcock’s creepy silent film, “The Lodger.” Its atmospheric tone begs the question why this music has not been recorded. Brewer’s ballad “All Stories Have an End” begins with a beautiful bowed bass and piano introduction before the addition of tenor sax and Kavanaugh on brushes. Shifting gears, the quartet finished with a typically uptempo but oddly timed “Cherokee.”

Berman Jazz Series

Dan Thomas Quintet concert brings changes

By Tom Ineck

TOPEKA, Kan.—For the inaugural concert of the first Berman Jazz Series, the Dan Thomas Quintet dared to be different, leaning heavily on a repertoire of bold originals rather than familiar standards. The Sept. 19 performance served notice that a new jazz breeze is blowing in Topeka, where too often the prejudices of the past have stifled the creativity of the artists.

To survive as a viable art form in the 21st century, jazz must continue to evolve. In the hands of saxophonist and composer Thomas, that future is assured. He and his Kansas City-based colleagues brought a wealth of talent and material to the stage, in the lower-level Hussey Playhouse at the Topeka Performing Arts Center.

Sensitive to older audience members who may be reluctant to change, the quintet began with the standard “Bye Bye Blackbird.” With Joe Parisi on flugelhorn, Roger Wilder on piano, Bram Wijnands on bass and Jim Eriksen on drums, Thomas faithfully addressed the melody on alto sax and gave everyone a chance to make a solo statement.

Wijnands, widely known for his talents as a stride pianist, also proved himself an able and authoritative bassist, opening the Thomas composition “Green Card” with a solo introduction before Thomas on alto and Parisi on trumpet stated the melody. A Parisi solo displayed a crystal-clear tone and a penchant for taking risks. Eriksen’s waltz-time ballad “Ernestine” was a beautiful that had Thomas switching to tenor sax and Parisi to flugelhorn.

Thomas soared on tenor on his “Life with Nadaj,” a reversal of his son’s name, Jadan, and Wilder’s keyboard solo offered inventive variations on the theme. Short solo statements by



Photo by Rich Hoover

Bram Wijnands, Joe Parisi, Jim Eriksen and Dan Thomas at work

all gave urgency to “Leading the Blind,” and “Blues for Bootie” put a new twist on an old set of changes.

Returning to more familiar territory, the quintet performed “Dear Old Stockholm,” often associated with Miles Davis and Stan Getz. On the obscure “Beatrice,” by saxophonist Sam Rivers, Wijnands held down a solid, swinging bass line, allowing Thomas on tenor and Parisi on flugelhorn to improvise.

Wordplay again entered the program with “Tuobanrut” (“Turnabout” backwards), a new uptempo composition by Thomas that spotlighted some imaginative drum breaks. While not exactly a standard, Frank Rosolino’s jazz waltz “Blue Daniel” is familiar to fans of the great trombonist and was an especially good vehicle for Wilder,



Photo by Rich Hoover

Thomas, Wijnands and Parisi

who quoted “If I Only Had a Brain.”

Eriksen also contributed the lovely “Silent Summer Storm,” a ballad with Thomas taking the lead on alto sax and Parisi taking the bridge on flugelhorn. “An original blues shuffle called “Upbeat and Busted” completed the concert with a rousing and playful “conversation” between tenor sax and trumpet.

Whether original or standard, the tunes that Thomas and his cohorts chose for the concert were accessible to all listeners who keep their ears open to change. The quintet was a joy to watch in performance, taking chances and feeding each other ideas. Thomas fronts the same group on his debut recording, “City Scope,” and it is obvious that they possess a rapport that is both musical and personal.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Jim Eriksen, TPAC’s Mark Radziewski and Butch Berman visit.

Concert Review

McPartland performs gallantly against odds

By Tom Ineck

Lincoln, Neb.—Jazz pianist Marian McPartland, at 86, performed gallantly if somewhat beneath her legendary status in concert Oct. 22 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Best known as genial host of public radio's "Piano Jazz," McPartland herself cheerfully alluded to her declining abilities after the opener, "Take the A Train," saying the tune was "courtesy of the Arthritis Foundation."

Her sideman, bassist Jim Cox and drummer Charles Braugham, gave her strong support throughout the two-hour concert before more than 1,100 people.

Fortunately, McPartland has never depended solely on keyboard pyrotechnics. Her reputation as an

interpreter of the great American popular song relies on unusual chords, lush harmonies and a liberal use of space and suspense.

Familiar crowd pleasers included "Star Eyes," "I'm Old-Fashioned," "All the Things You Are," and "You and the Night and the Music." The Bill Evans waltz "Very Early," Alec Wilder's waltz "While We're Young" and Ivan Lins' sentimental "Velas" seemed especially well-suited to McPartland's gentle elegance. She is capable of imbuing even the most



Marian McPartland

File Photo

simple, minimalist lines with grace and heartfelt emotion.

Several unexpected departures from the standard repertoire were welcomed. They included Ornette Coleman's frisky "Ramblin'," with lively drum fills by Braugham, Bernice Petkere's "Close Your Eyes" and a Coleman blues that provided plenty of opportunities for playful interplay among the trio.

McPartland cleverly inserted a classical fugue motif in the solo piano introduction of "All the Things You Are," returning to the motif later in a duo with Cox on bowed bass. The two performed exquisitely on a brief but beautiful statement of "Last Night When We Were Young," sans improvisation.

Returning to one of her favorite jazz pianists and composers, McPartland turned in a stunning version of Evans' "Turn Out the Stars." Mercer Ellington's bluesy "Things Ain't What They Used to Be" drew another wry comment from her on the general state of affairs.

Despite her valiant efforts, McPartland occasionally attempted arpeggios that lacked drive and assurance. She struggled through sections of "I'm Old-Fashioned" and wisely turned to Cox and Braugham when she needed a breather.

In a somewhat sad but profound encore, McPartland chose to perform "When the Saints Go Marching In" as a gospel-tinged ballad rather than a traditional flag-waver. Perhaps referring to the post-9/11 world, she began with a brief quote from "The Star-Spangled Banner" and finished with a stately piano solo.

Concert Preview

Berman series continues in Topeka

The Berman Jazz Series began in September and concludes in March at the Topeka Performing Arts Center in Topeka, Kan. The premiere series is primarily a showcase for prominent Kansas City-based musicians.

Luqman Hamza and Lucky Wesley will appear Feb. 13. Pianist-singer Luqman Hamza is a much-loved presence in Kansas City. Recent recordings include "With This Voice" and "When a Smile Overtakes a Frown." Bassist and singer Lucky Wesley also has been well-known to KC jazz fans for many years.

George Cables will perform a solo piano concert March 13.

Equally skilled as a leader, a sideman or in solo performance, Cables helped to define modern mainstream jazz piano of the 1980s and '90s. He gained recognition during his stints with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson and Freddie Hubbard. He was with Dexter Gordon during the tenor's successful return to the United States in the late 1970s. He has more than 20 recordings as a leader.

To order tickets by phone, call (785) 234-ARTS. To order by fax, dial (785) 234-2307. By mail, write Topeka Performing Arts Center, 214 SE Eighth Ave., Topeka, KS 66606.

Concert Review

Roy Haynes, at 78, leads a youthful quartet

By Tom Ineck

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—In a career spanning 60 years, drummer Roy Haynes has created a monumental resume, including important tenures with Charlie Parker from 1949 to 1952, touring the world with Sarah Vaughan from 1953 to 1958 and subbing for Elvin Jones in John Coltrane's legendary quartet from 1961 to 1965.

Since then, he has worked with artists as stylistically diverse as saxophonist Stan Getz, vibraphonist Gary Burton and guitarist Pat Metheny. Most recently, however, he has come into his own leading superb touring and recording ensembles. He fronted a quartet for a Sept. 18 appearance at the Gem Theater here. Joining him on stage were saxophonist Marcus Strickland, pianist Martin Bejerano and bassist John Sullivan, a youthful group of musicians, especially when compared with their venerable employer.

At age 78 and dressed in a silk shirt and lizard-skin boots, Haynes displayed an impeccable sense of time and an economy of motion that serves him well, simultaneously working snare drum, tom-toms, bass drum and ride cymbal with incredible ease and precision. The aptly named "Diverse" featured outstanding solos on tenor sax and piano, trades by the two musicians and a series of thunderous drum breaks.

Dave Brubeck's "In Your Own Sweet Way" was the perfect vehicle for Bejerano, a disciple of the Bill Evans school of keyboard impressionism. After a solo piano introduction, Strickland played the melody on soprano sax, then deconstructed it in an exploratory excursion into the unknown. Bass and drum solos followed,



File Photo

Roy Haynes

with Haynes especially potent.

At one point between tunes, Haynes reminisced about playing in the 18th and Vine Street area back in the 1950s. He said Count Basie had borrowed \$50 from him "right across the street from here."

Because Haynes provided considerable banter between tunes and the tunes themselves developed slowly and went on for 10 minutes or more, the quartet had time to play only a handful of numbers.

"My Heart Belongs to Daddy" had a distinctly Yiddish flavor, with Strickland keening on soprano sax and Bejerano creating elaborate piano flourishes. Haynes provided an insistent rhythmic pulse that made powerful presence undeniable. He fired a barrage behind Bejerano's inventive solo, which led to a modal, Trane-like soprano sax solo. Haynes got the audience involved by clapping along with

the irresistible rhythms.

"All Blues" was performed as a jazz waltz, beginning with a soprano sax solo, segueing into another outstanding piano solo and taking a funky turn with a drum break that relied heavily on the bass drum. It eventually took on the flavor of a revival meeting, with Haynes shouting and the audience responding. Another of the evening's highlights was a reading of "Mr. P.C.," Coltrane's lively tribute to bassist Paul Chambers. Haynes, at times, echoed the spirit of legendary predecessors Art Blakey and Elvin Jones in his muscular but virtuosic approach to time-keeping.

Joking about the upcoming presidential election and the prospect of George Bush's second term, Haynes demanded, "If he wants four more years, give me five more years!" Here's hoping that Roy Haynes gets his wish and more.

Concert Review

Scheps-Brock quintet creates a sense of surprise

By Tom Ineck

Lincoln, Neb.—Nine months, less one day, since the band’s first appearance at P.O. Pears in Lincoln, the Rob Scheps/Zach Brock Quintet returned Oct. 21 with a handful of new tunes and the same sense of surprise that had so impressed listeners back on Jan. 22.

Nine compositions from the evening’s two setlists were repeats, but in true jazz style Scheps, Brock and company maintained an improvisatory edge that made them sound vital and newly inspired. With a talented personnel that has remained stable since its last appearance, the quintet has developed a rapport and a group chemistry that is evident.

Co-leader Brock is a violin wizard who draws on influences as diverse as Stephane Grappelli and Jean-Luc Ponty. Still in their early 20s are keyboardist Jordan Baskin, bassist Matt Ulery and drummer Morgan Childs. Brock, Baskin and Ulery all hail from Chicago, while Childs is a native of Vancouver, B. C.

Scheps, a formidable saxophonist and flutist who splits his time between Portland, Ore., and New York City, remains

the quintet’s undisputed leader. He chooses the tunes and “conducts” the often-difficult arrangements with signals that keep his bandmates alert. Within that enforced structure, however, everyone is allowed much freedom of expression, both in compositional and instrumental contributions, creating the best of both worlds.

Like last January’s performance, the evening began with Brock’s “Mr. Shah,”



Photo by Rich Hoover

Members of the Rob Scheps-Zach Brock Quintet play at P.O. Pears. From left are Zach Brock, bassist Matt Ulery on tuba, Rob Scheps and Morgan Childs.



Photo by Rich Hoover

Jordan Baskin on keys

written in Nebraska City, where the band has performed and conducted workshops on more than one occasion. The composer sat this one out as Brock took the lead on violin and Childs set the rhythmic mood, with help from Baskin and Ulery. The bassist contributed “First Morning of the Tower,” inspired by the Tower of Pisa during a visit to that city. The leaping, lyrical tune is set in 7/4 time and featured a



Photo by Rich Hoover

Matt Ulery

a funky number that featured deftly intersecting lines between Scheps on tenor sax and the composer on violin. “Searching for Solace,” written by Baskin, began with a solo piano interlude leading into a ballad waltz with Scheps switching to flute. Ulery, Scheps and Baskin took admirable solos.

The first new tune in the repertoire was Keith Jarrett’s “Le Mistral,” from the period in which the composer featured iconoclastic saxophonist Dewey Redman in his band. Baskin set it up with a jagged electric piano statement before handing it off to Scheps on tenor, Brock on violin and Childs, with a drum solo that swirled and buffeted like the Mediterranean squalls for which the tune is named.

Scheps’ ballad “Crestfallen” was

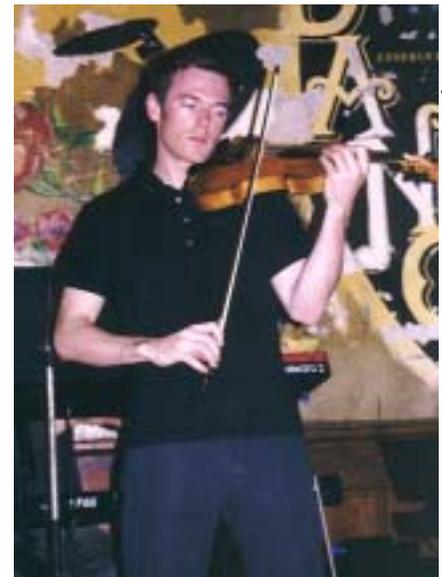


Photo by Rich Hoover

Zach Brock



Rob Scheps

Photo by Rich Hoover

and Vine” completed the first set with the trio of Baskin, Ulery and Childs excelling.

Brock’s frantic “Common Ground” opened the second set with a stunning showcase for the violin virtuoso. Scheps switched to flute for the Midwest premiere of his “Wurlitzer Waltz,” a captivating tune that also featured some wonderful keyboard work by Baskin. The band neatly segued into Scheps’ “New Homes,” weaving flute and violin lines and setting up another bracing electric piano solo by Baskin, followed in succession by bass, violin, violin/flute and drum statements.

Gary Smulyan’s swinging tune “Olivia’s Arrival” made a return appearance, again proving the compatibility of the sax and violin. The tune is, however, clearly a tour de force setting for Scheps’ tenor saxophone mastery. “Little Jewel,” by Scheps, is a ballad with a distinct gospel feel that had the saxophonist displaying his “fat” tone against Baskin’s bluesy keys and Childs’ brushwork.

nice solo by the composer.

Ornette Coleman’s typically manic “Happy House” provoked especially pungent statements by Scheps on sax, Brock on feedback fiddle and Baskin at a blazing tempo. The new tune “KC Strip at 18th



Morgan Childs

Photo by Rich Hoover

Saving the oddest till last, Scheps introduced his new “Capetown Races” by explaining that it was a case of “Beethoven goes to South Africa.” Just for the occasion, Ulery switched from bass to tuba for the stylistic clash of classical music, township jive and jazz. The results were mixed, as though pitting swing and anti-swing in an unfair fight. If nothing else, it epitomizes the refreshingly unconventional and uncompromising nature of the Scheps-Brock combo.

Memorial

“Boy Wonder” Toby, 15, bound for dog heaven

By Butch Berman

Thanksgiving may for awhile be a little bittersweet for me as I lost one of my best pals the day before. I know it’s all good, though. That’s what Toby would want me to believe.

At the ripe old age of 15, my bearded collie buddy had to be put to sleep. I think he just hung in there for me the past year or so as you could see him weakening daily—but only in body, not in soul. When his once-sturdy pins finally gave out, we talked it over and I finally gave in to let him go.

On his last night before passing over he had a great massage from Suzanne, the doggie therapist at Kenl’ Inn, got well groomed there as well, hung out with me, his old running mate, Sherman (a Springer spaniel turning 19) and Muggles the cat. We munched on BBQ chicken wings and reveled on

how we had been so fortunate to spend so many wonderful years together. Not a bad way to go out for any living creature.

I inherited Toby, like Sherman, from one of two different romantic relationships that didn’t make the long run, but led me towards better days. My spirituality, the Berman Music Foundation and these two cherished pets were all products from those “failed” unions.

Toby may have been the late Jimmy Hoffa reincarnated. A tough little fellow who liked to take charge, fight first and ask questions later, dug the ladies, and watching wrestling on TV



Toby at home

Photo by Butch Berman

while imbibing some of my best claret over the years. He truly was “one of the guys.” When my beloved Lab, Ben, was around, those two terrors plus Sherman could totally tear it up. Thankfully, with maturity they settled down to become my love posse and lifetime companions. Lassie and Rin Tin Tin are gonna need protection now that Toby is bound for dog heaven. If I were them, I’d call in King Kong.

Toby also had a huge heart, and you could actually see him worrying about stuff, besides being the ultimate protector. A complex, but genuine little character who embraced life with deep passion, and like his daddy (me), he loved his food maybe most of all. Yeah, memories are made of this kinda stuff. Isn’t it grand?

God bless you, Tobester.

Colorado Correspondent

S.F. Jazz Fest features r&b and stride legends

By Dan Demuth

SAN FRANCISCO—We recently drove from Colorado Springs, Colo., to this city by the bay to visit family and partake of some of the 2004 San Francisco Jazz Festival events. This year's fest ran from Oct. 14 to Nov. 7, at various locales throughout the city.

At the risk of being labeled an aging codger, I confess to sometimes opting to attend performances by those who have left a legacy, and for whom I may not again get the chance to see.

This time around, Etta James and the Roots Band was the first concert we attended, held in the beautiful old Masonic Auditorium. Earl Thomas opened and easily lived up to his revues as a vocalist with a timbre often compared to Al Green, Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett or Lou Rawls. Backed only by the acoustic guitar of Dane Heineh Andersen, his half-hour performance was too short.

The Roots Band is Kraig Kilby on trombone, Tom Poole and Ronnie Buttacavoli on trumpets, drummer (and son) Donto James, guitarists Bobby Murray and Josh Sklair (whose playing and features eerily reminded one of a young Eric Clapton), Dave Matthews on electronic keyboard, and piano man extraordinaire Mike Finnigan—who doubled vocally on duets with Etta on several songs.

"R&B and not jazz!" you say. True, but in recent years, R&B performers have made many inroads at jazz festivals. Given the various avenues jazz has traveled, R&B is definitely one of the many side roads. A native San Franciscan, as are several of her band members, James has a very loyal following.

She related a few stories of her youth there, including being discovered by Johnny Otis. He penned a tune which became a hit for her in 1955 on the old Modern label known best as "Dance with Me Henry" (originally titled "Roll with Me Henry" and then "The Wallflower"). This codger was mildly nonplussed when she did a montage of her hits, totally bypassing "Henry," and starting with the 1960 song "All I Could Do Was Cry." At 66, she still evokes a strong, no-nonsense mama persona. She alluded to some physical discomfort, sitting the entire performance, and declined an encore despite a long standing ovation.

The following evening, at the beautiful Davies Symphony Hall, we were treated to "The Joint Is Jumpin'", a Fats Waller 100th birthday celebration. Etta's contemporary and another R&B legend, Ruth Brown, was the featured vocalist. Her "backup band" also included a few notables you might recognize. Dick Hyman, Jay McShann and Mike Lipskin shared the piano duties, which on most numbers featured two of them playing together. (Hyman occasionally doubled on a gigantic in-house pipe organ.) Mario Suraci on bass, Harold Jones on drums, and Marty Grosz on guitar were the timekeepers, with Byron Stripling on trumpet, a man whose tone was as large as his size. His solos were audience favorites, as was his interplay with Ruth, both in chatting and adding a few "amens" to her vocalizing.

Hyman has to be recognized as one of the ablest and versatile jazz pianists today, in most any category. He and Lipskin were both right at home

in Waller's stride style, with Marty Grosz adding some colorful vocal renditions to some of the standards Fats created.

Amazing is possibly the best adjective for Mr. McShann. Approaching 90, he delighted the audience with two vocal renditions of blues, and his keyboard talent with the blues has lost very little. Reverting to the Waller songs, it gave one a warm feeling to watch the other musicians allow him to get comfortable with the meter before joining in. He did require an assist to the piano, as he did a few years back when he appeared at the Lincoln Hilton with the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra. A quite attractive young lady was his assist here, and if I recall correctly, he duplicated that same feat in Lincoln. There must be something in that Kansas City water!

Brown established an immediate rapport with the audience. She entered to a standing ovation, and her opening comment was, "I'm so damned old I didn't think I would ever get another gig like this." She had us in her palm from that point on. My sources say she would be 74, but again, as with Etta James, she proved that age doesn't necessarily negate a good performance. She sang several of the Waller standards, adding her own sometimes humorous connotations to the lyrics. She related as a youngster listening to Waller's music on the radio at night, while her mother worked as a cleaning lady, and her father issuing stern warnings to her to not try singing those "gut bucket" blues.

Unlike Etta, the audience was able to bring Ruth and the entire ensemble back out for an encore, with

one of the most lengthy and raucous standing ovations I can ever recall. With the concert ended, we had to retire to a San Francisco legend just up the street, Tommy's Joynt, for a few libations to bring us back down to ground level.

On a personal note, as a destination, this city invigorates and ener-

gizes like no other. Days at the beach by the Golden Gate, visiting ethnic neighborhoods, and nights gorging on seafood. On our last night, after leaving another landmark, The Buena Vista, we sampled Club Jazz Nouveau, just one block from the wharf. It was a great venue, with no cover charge and a reasonably priced

complete menu. Appearing the night we were there was the Luna Quartet, a local group who perform most of their own material, but if you close your eyes you would swear it was Dave Brubeck.

Mr. Bennett, we understand why you left your heart here.

Concert Review

Two streams of New Orleans music merge

By Tom Ineck

LINCOLN, Neb.—In a stroke of marketing genius, two streams of New Orleans roots music converged Sept. 23 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln, Neb., theoretically combining local audiences for traditional jazz and Cajun music.

The double bill also provided a history lesson in miniature, spanning from the early days of Crescent City polyphony, as represented by the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, to French-influenced dance music, as modernized by the ever-popular BeauSoleil, led by fiddler extraordinaire Michael Doucet.

Now in its 29th year of performing and recording, BeauSoleil draws its inspiration from a rural music form with roots in the Acadia region of Nova Scotia. When the British forcibly expelled the Acadians from their homeland, they sought refuge in Louisiana, creating the unique "Cajun" culture that still survives.

The six-piece band has almost single-handedly popularized the music worldwide, and they continue to add new tunes to their rich repertoire. Doucet's "Me and Dennis McGee," a typically lively two-step, is homage to another fiddle legend. "Looking Back to Acadia" reflects directly on the music's Canadian roots. "La Femme Qui Joua aux Cartes (The Woman Who Played Cards)" draws from the

Cajun storytelling tradition. The aptly named "Chanky Chank Francais" epitomized the two-step's lively pulse.

"You Made Me Laugh" is a swinging new addition to the band's playlist. Rub board and zydeco-style accordion were featured on "Bye, Bye Boozoo," a memorial tribute to the late zydeco bandleader Boozoo Chavis. "La Fleche d'Amour (Love Arrow)" reflected the bluesy, romantic side of the Cajun soul. "Malinda" brought a driving calypso sound to the evening's proceedings.

At least half a dozen tunes from the setlist are from the band's new release, "Gitane Cajun" on Vanguard Records.

After nearly three decades together, BeauSoleil plays their pure acoustic music with the ease and assurance of a family. Doucet's brother, David, is a superb guitarist and accordionist Jimmy Breaux completes the front line with lush and rhythmic contributions. Bassist Al Tharp, drummer Tommy Alesi and percussionist Billy Ware fill out the veteran lineup.

The Preservation Hall Jazz Band was introduced with a documentary video that was interesting but could have been edited to allow more live music.

Beginning with a quartet of trumpet, banjo, piano and bass, the band kicked things off with "Ain't She

Sweet?" sung by banjo player Don Vappie. Before they were joined by the rest of the band, trumpeter John Brunious took the vocal on "If I Had My Life to Live Over." Bassist Walter Payton provided strong support.

The ebullient "Bourbon Street Parade" was the cue for the drummer, tenor saxophonist and trombonist Frank Demond to join the fray. In classic style, the front-line brass converged in full flight for the out-chorus.

A boogie-woogie piano number loosened up the audience for the highlight of the evening, a stirring rendition of the Jelly Roll Morton classic "Buddy Bolden's Blues." Vappie delivered the lyric with feeling and performed with virtuosic dexterity on the banjo, an instrument usually limited to the role of rhythmic accompaniment. He punctuated his playing with incredible arpeggios and full-neck slurs.

The evening ended with the obligatory "When the Saints Go Marching In," with band members leading dozens of listeners in a snaking second line through the hall and onto the stage.

The double header drew more than 1,700 music fans of all ages, a rare occurrence in a music world splintered by niche marketing. The Lied Center would be well-advised to seek similar thematic programs in the future.

Artist Interview

Teraesa Vinson belongs to exclusive club

By Tom Ineck

Singer Teraesa Vinson belongs to a very exclusive club. She is among the very few working jazz musicians who have advanced degrees other areas and have actually worked within their disciplines before turning, or returning, to music.

After two years in New York City, she has released her debut recording, "Opportunity Please Knock." (*See my review following this story*). But first she became a doctor of psychology.

A native of St. Louis, Mo., Vinson was drawn to music at an early age, taking classical piano lessons and participating in numerous choral groups. Her maternal grandmother was a talented pianist and jazzophile with an extensive record collection and friends who included Rosemary Thigpen, the wife of drummer Ben Thigpen and mother of Ed Thigpen, drummer with the legendary Oscar Peterson Trio.

Vinson also appreciated the importance of an education beyond music. Her parents instilled the Midwestern work ethic that is largely responsible for her successful pursuit of academic excellence. Always a bookworm with many different interests, she eventually studied psychology, earning a bachelor's degree at Spelman College in Atlanta and a doctorate at the University of Florida in Gainesville, where she taught for a while after graduation.

"I taught a lot of things on humanistic theory, and I spent a lot of time with students who were sort of in-between, trying to figure out what they wanted to do with their lives. I kept telling them, 'live your dream' and 'follow your bliss.' After a while I thought, 'Wow, I really need to practice what I'm preaching.'"

Through a long process, studying in Gainesville with vocalist Brenda Bayne and later displaying her talents in New York



Teraesa Vinson and her band at East Side Sound in New York City

City's competitive open-mike venues, including regular sessions with pianist Lafayette Harris at Harlem's famed Lenox Lounge, Vinson has managed to overcome much of the stage fright that for many years prevented her from performing solo.

"It's still hard. During the recording (April and May) I wasn't doing any performing because I was really focusing on trying to get that done. But even those few months of taking off, and not making myself get up there and do it, took its toll." Now that the gigs are more frequent and her self-confidence is on the rise, facing that roomful of strangers is getting easier, she said.

Inevitably following her bliss, Vinson moved to New York in 2002. At age 30, she maintains a day job as an administrative assistant for J.P. Morgan while developing her career in jazz.

Bayne introduced Vinson to the music and improvisational magic of singer Sheila Jordan, who later proved a major influence on the young vocalist and even arranged a couple of the tunes on "Opportunity Please Knock" (reviewed elsewhere in this issue of *Jazz*).

"She's so open," Vinson said of Jordan. "She's in the city maybe two or three days a week and it's just packed with stu-

dents who come there. She gives everybody so much time, and she's so encouraging."

Her fascination with choral music led to work with the New Horizons Jazz Ensemble and the Barry Harris Jazz Ensemble. She still attends occasional classes with Harris, developing and practicing the essentials of vocal harmony.

"One thing I would like to do in the future is be part of a very small ensemble, a very tight harmony group, maybe three or four people. It keeps you fresh, it keeps your ears on the ball and it helps you when you're doing solo work, too, because it helps you with alternate ways of singing the melody and different ways of listening to something."

As in other areas of the country, finding jazz work in New York City remains difficult after the devastating events of 9/11, she said. Jazz artists who used to be booked six nights a week at no less than \$75 a gig are now forced to take jobs paying much less. Clubs that once hired quintets have scaled back to duos or trios, while others have either abandoned a live jazz policy or permanently closer their doors. Out of necessity, Vinson and others have resorted to performing in restaurants, coffee bars and other non-traditional jazz venues.

"New York is the center of the jazz universe and it would be nice to have more opportunity." New Jersey, she said, provides some employment opportunities for musicians who live there or who don't mind the drive from the city.

Vinson doesn't rule out returning to the classroom some day, perhaps balancing a part-time teaching career and a singing career simultaneously.

Meanwhile, her colleagues at J.P. Morgan have formed a solid fan base for her live gigs and her first CD. "They buy

Photo by Butch Berman

lots of drinks and the whole floor has bought my CD.”

Shifting to a discussion of her first studio experience, she praised her veteran bandmates for their professional advice, their group arrangements and their stellar performances on the CD. Rather than another version of “Autumn Leaves” or “Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise,” they persuaded her to settle on a mix of the familiar and the unfamiliar, including the Artie Shaw tune “Moonray,” the pop song “I Can’t Make You Love Me,” the Alec Wilder composition “While We’re Young” and the title track, a plea for equal rights by Oscar Brown Jr.

Among the more familiar melodies given a new treatment by Vinson are “What a Difference a Day Makes,” “The Night Has a Thousand Eyes,” “I’ve Got the World on a String,” “The Song is You” and “Young and Foolish.”

“When I listen to jazz, I like to listen mostly to instrumental music. When I listen to a lot of vocalists, and then go to learn the song yourself, you’re so ingrained in the way that person has done it that it’s really hard. It’s easier to listen to Bill Evans’ version of ‘Young and Foolish’ or his version of ‘Night and Day’ and then go learn the song straight from the chart, and find out how you want to do it.”

I admitted my own preference for “I Can’t Make You Love Me,” a tune that remains underappreciated despite renderings by Bonnie Raitt, Nancy Wilson, Kevin Mahogany and Freddy Cole.

“That’s probably the one I feel most proud of,” Vinson agreed. “I knew that I wanted to do something with it because it’s one of my favorite pop songs. It’s a really moving song that always has gotten me.” As the band began to arrange and rearrange it in rehearsals, it began to take

on a new life, exactly what Vinson had envisioned, and better.

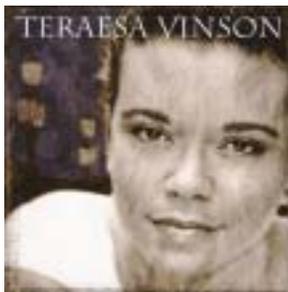
Vinson considers herself fortunate to have had such a high-caliber group of musicians on her first recording, including pianist Carlton Holmes, bassist Nicki Parrott, drummer Dion Parson, guitarist Tom Dempsey and tenor saxophonist Ron Blake. Past experience with each other gave them the sound of a true band, rather than a group of strangers straining for compatibility.

“For your first recording, it’s really good to have guys that have worked together a lot. They already have the rapport, and they can already anticipate each other’s movements, and you can just sort of step into that.”

With the first CD under her belt, Vinson is ready for the next step, broadening her audience in live performances at home and on the road.

CD Review

When opportunity knocks, vocalist Vinson answers



TERAESA VINSON
Opportunity Please Knock
Amplified Records

Teraesa Vinson’s voice is not huge, but what it lacks in sheer power and authority, she more than makes up with a sure sense of dynamics, rhythmic nuance and the kind of emotional connection that transcends mere technique.

Vinson’s impressive debut as a recording artist, the double entendre “Opportunity Please Knock,” is a coming-out that demands attention, not for in-your-face audacity but rather for its subtle romanti-

cism and impeccable taste. She understands the power of understatement and the allure of vulnerability. With few missteps, she uses her superb instrumental accompaniment to get the message across.

Her bandmates are truly a band, with pianist Carlton Holmes, bassist Nicki Parrott and drummer Dion Parson augmented by guitarist Tom Dempsey and tenor saxophonist Ron Blake.

Take the opener. The easy-swinging “What a Difference a Day Makes” begins with bass and voice only, gradually adding guitar and drums and finally tenor sax. “The Night Has a Thousand Eyes” picks up the tempo a bit, but Vinson still reins herself in, comfortably riding the crest of the piano wave created by Holmes.

It is the more obscure tunes, however, that seem the most effective. Artie Shaw’s “Moon Ray” gets a suitably enchanting, heart-felt treatment highlighted by Vinson’s sensuous vocal and Parrott’s walking bass line and yearning solo.

“While We’re Young,” one of those luminous Alec Wilder melodies, shines with a swinging mid-tempo shuffle, and Vinson’s endearing take on the lyric recalls the fancies of fleeting youth.

The title track is a 1960s plea for racial equality by Oscar Brown Jr., a tune covered in 1961 by Chris Connor, but seldom heard since. In Vinson’s hands, it also serves as a wake-up call for her growing fan base and her future employers.

“I Can’t Make You Love Me” is Vinson’s greatest achievement, a faithful rendition of the Bonnie Raitt hit that stands on its own alongside covers by Nancy Wilson, Kevin Mahogany and Freddy Cole. She caresses the haunting lyrics with sparse backing by Parson using brushes and mallets, Parrott on bass, Dempsey on guitar and Holmes on piano. As it builds in intensity, Blake enters with a powerful but restrained tenor solo, echoing Coltrane’s spiritual flights. A group arrangement, it is a gem in the collaborative art of jazz.

Jazz on Disc

“Soul Eyes” is definitive Cartwright recording

By Tom Ineck



JOE CARTWRIGHT
Soul Eyes
 Lafayette Music

“Soul Eyes” is the definitive recording for which longtime Joe Cartwright fans have been waiting, a live trio project that exemplifies the Kansas City pianist’s power and virtuosity in extended performances over a range of material.

It is hard to imagine a threesome more compatible than this one, as Cartwright is joined by KC stalwarts Bob Bowman on bass and Todd Strait on drums. Bowman’s fleet fingers, adventurous solo excursions and innate sense of time are perfectly matched to Strait’s percussive genius and sensitivity.

Of course, it is Cartwright’s playing that shines most brightly. Lush arpeggios, crisp, clean single-note lines (at any tempo), soulful blues inflections and stunning dynamics are just a few of his trademark qualities.

The Topeka Performing Arts Center is the setting for three tunes, including Henry Mancini’s classic “Dreamsville,” Cedar Walton’s keyboard workout “Ojos de Rojo” and Bowman’s lively “Hebgan Happy Hour.”

The Oak Bar of the Fairmont Kansas City hotel is the scene for

Pat Metheny’s lovely “Always and Forever,” Gershwin’s “Love Walked In” and Wayne Shorter’s “Fall,” and Kansas Public Radio captured the trio’s rendition of the title track by Mal Waldron.

“Ojo de Rojo” is a case in point, with Cartwright building the intensity before handing it off to Bowman for an inspired solo. Strait then makes an inventive solo statement on cymbals and toms.

In like manner, Bowman begins the 15-minute “Love Walked In” with a bluesy bass blast, setting the stage for a lengthy and soulful exploration by Cartwright, followed by briefer, but equally splendid bass and drum solos.

The three ballad selections, “Dreamsville,” “Always and Forever” and “Soul Eyes,” capture the trio in its most sensitive interplay. Metheny’s gentle tune is especially affecting in its honest, unabashed romanticism. Bowman and Strait show admirable restraint on the title track, clearly a showcase for Cartwright’s astonishing keyboard prowess.

Recorded at three different venues last March, the sound throughout is well engineered and amazingly unified. With just seven tracks totaling more than 70 minutes, “Soul Eyes” is a generous package perfect for the gift-giving season.

To order the CD, visit Joe Cartwright’s website at www.joecartwright.com or go to the Jazz Links page of the BMF website at www.bermanmusicfoundation.org and click on the Joe Cartwright link.



BILL CARROTHERS
Armistice 1918
 Bridge Boy Music

Since his audacious performance in Lincoln, Neb., in April 1998 with drummer Bill Stewart and saxophonist Anton Denner as part of the trio A Band in All Hope, pianist Bill Carrothers of the Twin Cities has become one of our favorites here at the Berman Music Foundation.

Carrothers’ latest and most ambitious project, the two-disc, 30-track “Armistice 1918,” seems to take up where his Civil War homage left off a few years ago. But where “The Blues and the Greys” was a solo piano recording, this is a larger, collaborative effort featuring the haunting voice of Carrothers’ wife, Peg, and tasteful instrumental contributions by Matt Turner, cello; Drew Gress, bass; Stewart, drums, Jay Epstein, percussion and sound effects; and Mark Henderson, bass clarinet.

Similarly to the Civil War collection, the first half of “Armistice 1918” revisits familiar tunes from the World War I period, re-imagining them in unconventional—sometimes frightening—ways. Starting things off, Bill and Peg Carrothers sing a wistful duet on “There’s a Long Long Trail a Wind-ing.” Then Bill improvises on a swinging trio rendition of “Hello Ma Baby.”

His solo stride piano on “Cuddle Up a Little Closer” is light and breezy.

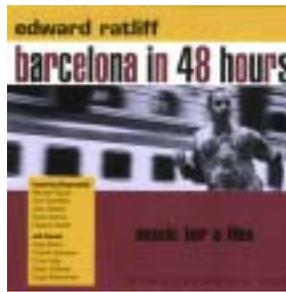
But “Armistice 1918” does not glamorize or mythologize war. Rather, it dramatically contrasts jingoism, popular myth and naïve sentimentality with the real horrors of overwhelming death and destruction. Stewart seems to be dropping “bombs” in the middle of “Let Me Call You Sweetheart.” The sad irony is palpable in Peg Carrothers’ poignant reading of “Say Au Revoir,” as it is in the ominous march tempo of “A Call to Arms (On Moonlight Bay).”

“I’m Always Chasing Rainbows,” taken at a funereal tempo, is followed by a melancholic “And the Band Played On” and a downright creepy “Christmas 1914 (Silent Night),” its choral voices straining against discordant piano and cello. “There’s a Long Long Trail a Winding” returns in an instrumental version, with a brief half-hearted vocalization of “Over There,” the predominant World War I flag-waver. It is a powerful statement of war’s futility and collective amnesia.

Saddest of all is “I’m Afraid to Come Home in the Dark,” with its tolling bells and thunder claps, and the bittersweet finale, “Till We Meet Again.”

The 2-CD package includes a 36-page booklet with period photos, poems and liner notes by Carrothers and Thomas Compere-Morel, curator of the Historial de la Grande Guerre, a WWI museum in Peronne, France, that contributed financially to the project. Carrothers toured France with this music Oct. 8-Nov. 15.

We can also recommend Carrothers’ recordings “After Hours,” “Duets with Bill Stewart” and “Ye Who Enter Here,” by A Band in All Hope. All of these and more are available through Bridge Boy Music at www.bridgeboymusic.com.



EDWARD RATLIFF
Barcelona in 48 Hours
Strudelmedia

Despite its rather ambiguous title, “Barcelona in 48 Hours” reaches far beyond the city limits of Spain’s principal seaport. Composer and multi-instrumentalist Edward Ratliff has drawn inspiration from the music of North Africa and Latin America, with occasional flashes of Argentine tango, hip-hop rhythm and surf guitar.

The result, which was recorded, mixed and mastered in Brooklyn and New York City, is a fascinating journey through the wonderful world of movement and music. Its thematic cohesion comes from the fact that it was composed for a short film portrait of choreographer, teacher and dancer David Zambrano. Made by photographer Anja Hitzberger and Ratliff, the film is made almost entirely from black-and-white still photographs.

Having not yet seen the film, I can only imagine that it is this evocative music that breathes life into its otherwise static images. With the able assistance of his band—the aptly named Rhapsodalia—Ratliff moves swiftly through the paces, never allowing his colleagues or the listener to become complacent.

In many cases, Ratliff relies on his own virtuosity on cornet, trombone, accordion, celeste and the Fender Rhodes piano to provide the broad palette of sounds. Also essential to the mix are bandmates Michael Attias on alto and baritone saxes, Sam Bardfeld on violin, John Hebert on bass and Kevin Norton on drums. Additional support

comes from Andy Biskin, bass clarinet; Charlie Giordano, accordion; Chris Kelly, programming, guitar and drums; Seido Salifoski, dumbek; and Doug Wieselmann, guitar.

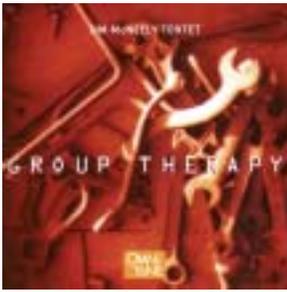
When coupled with Ratliff’s background in free improvisation and his offbeat esthetic approach, this instrumental *mélange* gives a startlingly original sound to “Barcelona in 48 Hours.” It begins with a full five-piece band version of the central theme, “Barcelona,” which is later restated on accordion and bass, later still by a quarrelsome quartet and finally on solo accordion.

Between these thematic variations, we hear the gentle waltz on solo celeste entitled “Glass,” the eerie theme called “Horsey,” the Eastern-tinged “Estacio de Franca” for accordion and dumbek and the sensuous bolero “Night Dance,” highlighted by Ratliff’s muted cornet and Wieselmann’s sinuous guitar lines. “Sintuba” brings the soundtrack to a rousing, rhythmic climax with a seven-piece ensemble propelled by an irresistibly pulsating beat.

Liz Jeans, a freelance choreographer, teacher and performing co-founder and artistic director of Rite of Danse in Kansas City, Mo., also has given this project her enthusiastic endorsement. Jeans’ own Latin dance presentation, “Sierra Latina: A Latin Evening of Dance,” was staged a year ago at the Kansas City Music Hall and was reviewed in *Jazz*.

The impressionistic film for which this music was composed has been screened at film and dance festivals in Italy, Spain, France, Austria, Germany, Hungary and Venezuela, as well as on both U.S. coasts and in Minneapolis. A live, multimedia version performed by Ratliff debuted in February to sold-out houses and critical acclaim at Dance Theater Workshop in New York City.

Here’s hoping that “Barcelona in 48 Hours” will come soon to a theater near us. Meanwhile, the CD is available at www.strudel.net.



JIM McNEELY TENTET
Group Therapy
 OmniTone Records

With “Group Therapy,” OmniTone Records continues its exciting tightrope walk along the cutting edge, the outer fringe of the mainstream, where deconstructed standards and bold new compositions meet on common ground.

The Jim McNeely Tentet draws its exceptional players from the ranks of the Vanguard and Carnegie Hall jazz orchestras and includes Tony Kadleck, Greg Gisbert and Scott Wendholt, trumpets; Tom Varner, French horn; Ed Neumeister, trombone; Dick Oatts, Billy Drewes and Scott Robinson, saxes; Cameron Brown, bass; and John Hollenbeck, drums. Pianist McNeely wrote half of the eight tunes here, and arranged all of them.

However, it is their reinterpretation of the four “cover” tunes that give McNeely and the Tentet their unique identity. Bud Powell’s “The Fruit” opens the CD with a dramatic transformation of the original composition. Like a deck of cards, the discrete themes are shuffled, cut and dealt in innovative ways, and literally everyone in the band gets a solo.

“Silent Night” is revelatory, with the familiar theme only hinted at until late in the game. Like a ghost of Christmas past, the haunting refrain slowly emerges and is repeated and echoed in the brass section, with especially poignant playing by Wendholt on muted trumpet.

Coltrane’s “Village Blues” gets a more traditional treatment, with Neumeister delivering a growling,

plunger-muted tailgate solo. A repetitive brass motif, a lovely brass chorale and the gorgeous alto saxophone playing of Oatts elevate “Body and Soul” far above the mundane treatments that this old warhorse usually receives.

“Lost” exhibits McNeely’s composing and arranging genius in the counter-balancing of written section parts and improvisation, especially during Oatts’ inspired alto saxophone excursion. Like the therapeutic session for which it is named, “Group Therapy” evolves from individual “voices” to overlapping statements and even angry outbursts that are eventually brought under control by the soothing melody, representing the mediating therapist.

These extended pieces range from six minutes (“Body and Soul”) to over 11 minutes for the title track, creating plenty of “breathing” room in the arrangements and plenty of solo space. But McNeely’s leadership never allows the individual statements to become gratuitous blowing. It is a marvelous accomplishment.



BRENT JENSEN
The Sound of a Dry Martini: Remembering Paul Desmond
 Origin Records

We have mentioned before the similarity between the alto sax sound of Brent Jensen and the late Paul Desmond, composer of “Take Five” and long a member of the Dave Brubeck Quartet.

It was especially evident throughout Jensen’s weekend performances at the 2004 Topeka Jazz Fes-

tival. All the elements are there—the phrasing, the fleet fingering, and the tone. Perhaps it’s the tone more than anything, a tone that Desmond himself described thusly: “I think I had it in the back of my mind that I wanted to sound like a dry martini.”

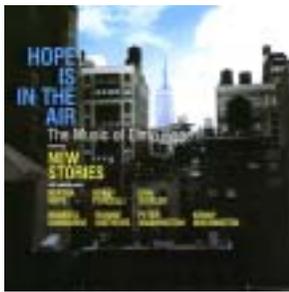
Known for his sly and witty observations, Desmond had put his finger on it. It is a cool and refreshing sound—light, bubbly, seemingly transparent, but nonetheless intoxicating. Jensen has tapped into it on this tribute CD, with a collection of tunes largely associated with Desmond.

Rather than be compared with the Brubeck group, he has assembled an excellent pianoless quartet also featuring guitarist Jamie Findlay, bassist Zac Matthews and drummer Dean Koba.

Desmond’s lovely “Wendy” starts things off in a subtle swing tempo. “Tangerine” picks up the pace slightly, and “Black Orpheus” introduces the Latin tinge for which Desmond was so admired. The quartet gently swings the blues on “Things Ain’t What They Used to Be.”

The obligatory “Take Five” appears here, but Jensen takes a new approach while remaining true to Desmond’s spirited, lilting style. Koba’s outstanding percussion work also is prominently featured. Matthews’ walking bass sets the mood for “Audrey,” co-written by Desmond and Brubeck. Echoes of the Brubeck group return with Gerry Mulligan’s “Line for Lyons.”

Over its eight minutes, “Body and Soul” is painted on a broad canvas with a minimalist brush and long, sinuous lines receding to the horizon, Jensen exploring every nuance of the classic changes. “Out of Nowhere” is taken at a lively tempo, but Jensen still maintains that “cool” Desmond-style control. With its sweet nostalgic melody and waltz tempo, “Alice in Wonderland” is the perfect closer to this fine set.



NEW STORIES

Hope Is in the Air: The Music of Elmo Hope Origin Records

Another drug casualty of the post-bop era, pianist Elmo Hope died in 1967 at age 43, seemingly putting an end to his potential influence on other musicians. But he left behind a wealth of little-known compositions that trumpeter-producer Don Sickler has now turned to good purpose on this collaborative project.

With the help of Hope's widow, pianist Bertha Hope, Sickler compiled a collection of Hope's music, wrote

lead sheets and turned it over to New Stories, the excellent Seattle-based trio of pianist Marc Seales, bassist Doug Miller and drummer John Bishop. The result is "Hope Is in the Air," a loving tribute to a too-long-forgotten piano legend.

Sickler and Bertha Hope also make appearances, and alto saxophonist Bobby Porcelli plays a prominent role on four of the 14 tracks. Finally, "This Sweet Sorrow" is a haunting vocal rendering of Hope's ballad "Barfly," sung by lyricist Roberta Gambarini and accompanied by pianist Ronnie Mathews, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Kenny Washington. In its varied settings, this sumptuous CD shows the full scope of Hope's original music.

To open the proceedings, Porcelli deftly wends his way through the stop-and-go changes of "Sims a Plenty," a mid-tempo bopper. He also graces the frenetic "One Second Please," the gently swaying "Roll On"

and the hard-charging "Carving the Rock" (co-written by Sonny Rollins) with his exuberant, imaginative playing.

The Latin-tinged "Dee-Dah," the lilting "Nieta" and the aptly spicy "Hot Sauce" alert listeners to the similarity between Hope's music and that of his contemporaries Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk. Seales acquits himself well in this challenging role, attacking the keyboard with flair. The solid support of Miller and Bishop also is evident on tunes like "A Kiss for My Love," the gorgeous ballad "Eyes So Beautiful as Yours" and the exotic "Stars Over Marrakech."

Bertha Hope and Sickler duet on the ballads "Monique" and "Three Silver Quarters," and Hope is featured with Miller and Bishop on "Low Tide." In her expressive and sensitive playing, she shows a natural affinity for her husband's music.

Discorama

Singer Jeff Baker does Chet Baker with style

By Butch Berman



JEFF BAKER *Baker Sings Chet* OA2 Records

You can't deny that perks still play a big roll in the entertainment biz. The once revered 45 rpm record gave way to LPs and then CDs. Now CDs are almost the calling/business card of today. The Web, home CD burners and

the whole music-buying scene is such a different ballgame that the once traditional is now merely passé.

Thank God, still occasionally tucked away in this marketing maze of hopes and dreams are some very talented people that just wanna start something, somewhere.

Being on the OriginArts and OA2 Records catalog mailing list is a major perk for me. They've become an extremely tasteful, prolific pair of record companies that just keep expanding in size, without shrinking in quality. It's the Northwest's main music machine around, and you just can't beat the incredible player-production staff trio known as New Stories.

Hence, this product at hand. Mr.

Baker's fine vocal performance on "Baker Sings Chet" sat around on the usual huge stack of CDs and vinyl to be cleaned, sorted, reviewed and hopefully enjoyed before retiring to my vast foundation music library. As the new artistic director of the Topeka Jazz Festival in Kansas, I've been keeping an ear out for more male jazz vocalists, remembered this CD, and decided to give it a spin. Always a big fan of trumpeter Chet Baker—both his horn and singing—I was curious what this seemingly very young fellow had for chops.

Well, he processed a mega-dose of ability in many directions—decent timing, timbre and choice of material

Continued on page 22

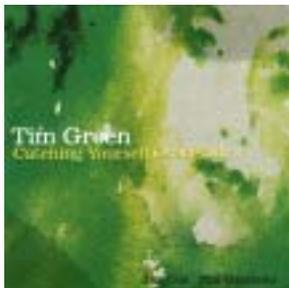
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backed by a wonderful swinging band to make this lovely, yet fairly predictable collection of tunes a winner. Everybody cooks aplenty—mostly all killer, no filler—and if you value my opinion on who's hot besides Baker, alto saxophonist Brent Jensen simply simmers throughout. I've dug his stuff from the first note of his beautiful tribute CD to Paul Desmond.

Jeff's vocalizing interplay with all the cats on this ultra-romantic, yet cookin' creation shows his musical gifts and wisdom beyond his years.

Just days after I first heard this I got a call from his mum/manager out of the blue, just checking out me and the Berman Music Foundation for possible venues for her talented offspring. Here you go, mom. You've got a kid to be proud of, and I'm telling everyone to pick up on this splendid piece of work.

Visit www.ear2records.com and dig it, daddy-o.



TIM GREEN
Catching Yourself Gracefully
OA2 Records

Before I can say anything nice about pianist Tim Green, I must tell you first about my encounters with his bass player, Jim Cox. Without first meeting Jim, no Tim.

I first met Mr. Cox when involved with bringing jazz mandolinist Don Stiernberg to Lincoln for Jazz in June a couple of years ago. Jim was his bassist. Move ahead to now. While waiting for a call from the Rob Scheps-Zach Brock Quintet, who were a little late

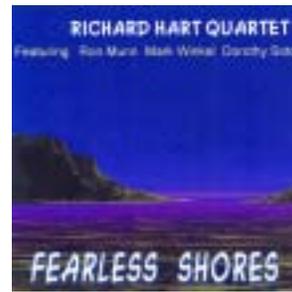
getting into town for a BMF gig at P.O. Pears, the phone rings. Hi Rob...no...who? It's Jim Cox, also in Lincoln as part of the Marian McPartland Trio playing at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Well, Jim came to our show, stayed for the late-night hang, and was ever-so-decent to arrange an intermission meeting with Ms. McPartland for myself and wife, Grace. Another late-nighter and Jim glances at this rather towering pile of CDs to be checked out for reviews in this newsletter and says, "Hey, ya know I'm on that one? I think it's pretty good." With that, Tim Green's lovely "Catching Yourself Gracefully" made it to the top of the heap.

Jim was true to his word too. This piano trio recording is another OriginArts catalog diamond deserving mucho attention. With the addition of drummer Phil Gratteau (also a Stiernberg alumnus), this trio takes you there, from Green's own catchy and clever opener, "Coyote Samba," to a gorgeous rendition of Cedar Walton's "Bolivia." More perfectly penned Green tunes weave through memorable arrangements of Cole Porter's "Love For Sale," Duke's "Don't You Know I Care?" and totally funk'n' you out in a take on "Back At the Chicken Shack" that would have turned Jimmy Smith's head around for the rousing closer.

Tim's keyboard stylings swing at times very delicately, but can romp and stomp with the best of 'em, yet still stay true to the jazz idioms with enough panache to make him ever so New York ready. It was great to really hear (and see with Marian) the jazz brilliance contained in the mind and hands of Cox. Chicago's always been known for killer bass players, and he's no exception. Phil's ingenious, tasteful and propelling drum work round out this trio to a T.

I'm glad I didn't have to wait much longer to discover this music that stays fresh with repeated listening. Order at www.ear2records.com.



RICHARD HART QUARTET
Fearless Shores
Schepora IRL Records

I'm still trying to connect what alerted a Kathleen Hutson to send the Berman Music Foundation a promo package containing this CD, which—from among countless others—was picked to review. I knew none of the cats in the group, but the cover was beautiful...who knows? Nevertheless, this 30-minute excursion containing nine catchy tunes penned by guitarist-leader Richard Hart caught on immediately.

A variety of grooves and rhythms that cover all the jazz bases seem to lock you in, and the ride is most enjoyable. Like the great Jerry Seinfeld series, a show about "nothing" that said something, "Fearless Shores" conveys simple tunes played flawlessly with beauty, truth and spirit throughout, with an almost addictive infectiousness that returns this CD to your player on a regular basis. These players are saying a mouthful without having to yell.

You could dig these sounds for a variety of activities, such as learning how to dance, housekeeping, Ping-Pong, making love, or just enjoying a nice cabernet, sittin' back and diggin' it, man.

The quintet consists of Mr. Hart on guitar, Ron Munn on sax, Dorothy Soto on bass and, holding down the big beat behind it all, drummer Mark Winkel—truly your complete, tight unit. It's the perfect bar band, but jazzy enough for the purists. Solid production work from Sonic Wings Recording Services' Mark S. Miller, too. Go out and find this lil' gem pronto or order direct from schepora@yahoo.com.

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Jazz festival unveils painting



Photo by Rich Hoover

Mark Radziejewski, assistant director of the Topeka Performing Arts Center (TPAC) admires the official painting for the 2005 Topeka Jazz Festival. The original painting was done by a local Topeka artist.

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