



VOL. III, NUMBER I

JANUARY 1992

BUTCH CONN, EDITOR

Dobek to Appear at Skidmore



Dan Dobek, area pianist who appeared at our Jazz Picnic in 1990, will appear as a soloist at Skidmore's Filene Music Hall on Friday March 6, 1992 at 7pm.

The performance will consist of exciting new music from his Jazz Suite entitled "Seasons within the Heart. In addition, Dobek will play some popular Jazz standards. In total the concert will cover stylings

covering 40 years of Jazz.

Mr. Dobek is known for his intense and emotional playing. His recording, reviewed in our newsletter last year has been broadcast nationally and has received great reviews.

The admission charge will be \$3.00 for Skidmore students, Senior Citizens and Skidmore community and only \$6.00 for the general public. Another Jazz bargain that has got to come under the category of cheap thrills!

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Last Issue

This is your last issue! (if you aren't a member or if you haven't let us know when you bought a ticket that you wanted the newsletter).

So many of you have bought tickets, become members, volunteered and been good friends of the Jazz Community. But with cutbacks in all of the arts funding sources, it's tough to carry some of you on the "free" list. And now the good old Post Office has raised its rates for bulk mail and changed other rules that makes it expensive to be generous.

If you haven't become a member, renewed your membership or told us you wanted to be a part of making A Place for Jazz in Northeastern New York when you came to our concerts, this will be your last mailed issue. (Please call me at 374-6912 if you think you might have forgotten to renew or give me your name when

Continued on back

2 0 0 W o r d s

by Glyn Evans

More on "No Figs"

(Note: The "prequel" to *More On "No Figs"* appears in APFJ Vol II. No. 4)

At first glance, Tristano's title "No Figs" is as enigmatic as many other Jazz titles. In fact it refers to a bitter Jazz controversy that erupted in the 1940's.

Bird, Diz, Bud and Monk; the beboppers had arrived, challenging earlier jazz forms rhythmically, melodically and harmonically. Many older players reacted critically. Armstrong said "Aww, that's slop! No melody.", although Diz writes that Louis never criticized him personally. Boppers were such a threat to older players, those like, say, Coleman Hawkins or Don Byas, were unable or unwill-

ing to grow with the music.

The controversy spilled over into the public arena with critics and fans divided. Someone (perhaps Leonard Feather) named the old school audience 'moldy figs'. Even as a high school boy in Wales I was aware and partisan. The debate grew beyond words. Diz recalls a fistfight between rival factions when playing in Paris in 1947. There is no question the boppers saw themselves in the Jazz tradition - the line from Oliver, Armstrong, Eldridge, Diz is clear.

For the boppers, struggling with their own genius in a difficult environment, to have their roots questioned was bitter. Now the beautiful music is richer. Time passes.

Play on Life of Billie Holiday

Heritage Artists at the Cohoes Music Hall announced that a play on the life of the world famous Jazz singer, Billie Holiday will begin previews on January 22 and continue through February 16th. The play, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* was written by Lamie Robinson and stars Debra Tidwell, who transfers her much praised starring role from Washington, D.C. to the Capital District area.

The play takes place during the last seven days of Billie Holiday's life and is set in a bar where she performs with live musicians on stage. The musical was the hit of the Off-Broadway season in 1986 and continues to draw intense interest as it tours the country.

Ms. Holiday is considered to be one of the most influential artists in Jazz history. Her phrasing, timing and musical interpretation has been listened to and imitated by singers and musicians all over the world. Her life was both an artistic triumph and a personal tragedy. This combination has made her the subject of writers, poets, scholars, movie-makers and playwrights. It is a show not to be missed!

For information about tickets call the Cohoes Box Office at 235-7969. Preview performances will be January 22nd and 23rd.

RECORDS *insuch*

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M y S o l o

Big Band Jazz

is a marvelous form of the art. Wondrous delights have been put forth under the leadership of Basie, Kenton, Ellington, Herman, Lunceford and Henderson to name just a few. The 18 piece aggregation is truly a marvel... and almost a Jazz dinosaur since the 1950's and sixties.

With the exception of a few leaders such as Herman, Basie and Ellington, it has been almost impossible to keep these living organisms alive for more than a few years. They are nightmares of logistics and finance, are hard to move around, expensive to keep and have all the complexity that you might expect from trying to get 18 very creative people to do anything at the same time!

In the past these groups earned their living through playing for public and private dances. They kept up with their cost by traveling 300 days a year, using buses and carefully balancing the egos of the soloists and section players. Leaders such as Ellington and Basie had to be a mixture of psychologist, music director, composer and father figure.

This constant travel and continual play melded these musicians into an ensemble that could almost think in unison. It also allowed composers like Ellington and

Strayhorn to write for particular soloists in full knowledge that they would be there year after year to display their talents.

That doesn't happen any more... or does it?

Over 100 musicians are actively rehearsing in 6 Big Bands in this area. Many have regular rehearsal dates, some as often as once a week, but most rehearse only once a month. The participants range from full time professional musicians with national stature to part-time musicians who still keep their "day" job. Most of these bands will never be heard by a paying public. Why would a musician spend all this time rehearsing for no money? Why would leaders like Diane Marlowe, Stan Szepekowski, Paul Couch, Lou Pettys, Skip Parsons, Emil Kalled and others spend their money to buy and have charts written, renting rehearsal halls with no jobs in sight? ...The chance to play big band charts.

Big Band Jazz can only be performed with the cooperation of a large number of other musicians. The musicians work hard, put out money to develop their music library and put a lot of time into rehearsal because they enjoy playing together, the challenge of reading new scores and the chance to play with some of the outstanding soloists in the area. One musicians told us

he does it because he likes "to hang" with the best musicians in town. Others do it because it helps them build their "chops."

Wouldn't it be great to have a big band series in the area so we could hear them all? Or have somebody hire them for a dance AND concert!

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J

The information below was sent to us by the clubs listed below. It's best to check by telephone before going because there may be last minute changes. Clubs have a cover (or music charge) or a minimum purchase (food or drink). Frequently both. Reservations are advisable (especially for better-known groups) as many of the clubs seat less than 100.

Justin Mc Neill's 301 Lark St., Albany. Musichas been pushed up to 10:30pm, but still 3 sets. Very small. Excellent food. Reservations a must. Cover and minimum. Jazz Brunch on Sundays at 11am. Music begins at 12noon. (b = brunch)

February

- 1- Plus 24
- 2-Rob Fish Duo **b**
- 7-8- Nick Brignola Quartet
- 9-John McLean Duo w/L. Brown **b**.
- 14- Hal Miller w/J. Monterose
- 15- Hal Miller w/Erika Lindsay
- 16-E. Lindsay w/Franchesca Tankersley **b**
- 21-22-Dave Colarco & Jazz Caucus
- 23- Jody Shayne Duo **b**
- 28-29- Greg Abaté Qt.
- March** (brunches TBA)
- 1- Peg Delaney Duo **b**
- 6-7- Brian Melvin Trio (played with Jaco Pastorius)
- 13-14-Hal Miller Band
- 20-21-Nick Brignola Qt.
- 27-28-Chuck D'Aloia Trio

The Van Dyck 237 Union Street, Schenectady. 374-2406
Music at 9pm Call for listings

A

Calendar

Van Dyck Cont.

February-

- 13-Doc Springs
- 21-22 Dave McKenna
- Watch for Marion McPartland

Fountain Restaurant 283 New Scotland Ave., Albany. 482-9898
Skip Parsons and his Riverboat Jazz Band 2nd weekend every month 10pm-2am. Call for details.

Skip Parsons Presents at the Italian American Community Center Washington Ave. Ext., Albany 456-0292. Sunday Jazz Brunch 11:30 am-2pm. \$15. Skip's band performs with special guest artist each week.

February

- 2- Pete Compo
- 9- Bobby Pratt
- 16-Tom Artin
- 23-Vince Giordano

March

- 1- Frank Vignola
- 3- MARDI GRAS evening dinner and dance** 7-11pm w/ two bands Sammy Kaye and Skip Parsons. \$30. Call 439-2310

Troy Music Hall 88 Fourth St., Troy, 273-0038. This is a truly wonderful place to listen to Jazz. It's too late to buy the series, but don't miss the others. February 7- Ellis Marsalis

Marcus Roberts duo

- March 21-The Harper Brothers
- April 4- Tito Puente
- Call for Tickets. These performances usually sold out in advance!

Z

Iron Horse Cafe 20 Centre St., Northampton, Mass. 413-584-0610. There's a music charge and most concerts are ticketed (about \$10) Call 1-800-THE-TICK for advance ticket sales. Seats about 170.

February

- 8- Young Lions of Jazz:Wallace Roney Quartet
- 9-Anita O'Day Quartet
- 13-Dirty Dozen Brass Band
- 17-Elvin Jones Quintet w/Sonny Fortune, Ravi Coltrane
- 23-Dr. John
- 26-Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens
- March**
- 13- Buster Williams and Rene Rosnes

Half Moon Cafe 154 Madison Ave., Albany 436-0329

February/March - every Friday
Cygnus

Mother Earth Cafe corner of Western and Quail.*New..* Health Food, no alcohol served. BYO. Music from 8-11pm

February

- 2- Seven Rabbit Stew
- February thru March**
- Every other Thursday Miché Fambro

DeWitt Clinton Valentine's Sweetheart Ball! February 15 8pm to 1am. Doc Scanlon's Band in an evening of feasting and dancing. Catered by the Cranberry Bog. Includes dinner. Call 465-7423 for further information

Z

RADIO JAZZ

Listed below are the stations and some of the programs available

WVCR 88.3FM Cutting edge Afro-Am Pop w/occasional Jazz flavor.

WMHT 89.1FM Boylan's Show on Saturday Night.

WRUC 89.7FM Late night play is good.

WAMC 90.3FM Great mix. Tim Coakley (Friday Night), Jazz After Hours (Midnight to early AM Fri and Sat), McPartland and Jazzset (8pm to 10pm Sunday Nights)

WSPN 91.1FM Gail Mattison's show, Wed. 12 to 3pm
Dave Casner, Mon. 3-6pm .

WCDB 90.9FM Wonderful Show on Sat. & Sun Mornings plus 11am to 1pm daily.

WRPI 91.5FM Kevin Roberts Thurs.pm, 7 to 10. Important Jazz musicians in great depth.

WHRL 103.1FM Jazz and "other" kinds of music. David Sanborn Show on Sunday is an interesting mix.

WPYX 106.7FM Jazz Brunch on Sunday.

WMVI 1160AM Robin Quinn Jazz Show from 3pm - 7pm on Sunday Afternoon.

WABY 1400AM Good on Big Band play; Edwardsen (6am to 10am) in Morning .

Pauly's 337 Central Ave., Albany 426-0828

February

14- Tango Man(Latin/Rock/Fusion)

13- Sandra Wright (blues)

March

5-Talking with Angels (Fusion)

9 Maple Ave., Jazz Club

9 Maple Ave., Saratoga Springs. Frequently has cover of \$2.

February

1-Dick Johnson Trio, cover

7-Cole Broderick & Cliff Avery 6-8pm

8-Tony Costanzo trio w/Paul Mastriani, Chris Rouse 10pm-2am cover

14- Don Young, Jazz Guitar 6-9pm

15- Cole Broderick & Friends 10pm-2am cover

21-Cole Broderick & Cliff Avery 6-8pm

22- Central Park East 10 to 2am

28- Ray Alexander 6-8pm

29-Airwaves 10pm-2am, cover

March

6- Cole Broderick & Cliff Avery

7-John Hilton Trio

14-Tony Constanzo and Friends

20-Ray Alexander

21-Cole Broderick & Friends

28-Teresa Broadweell Trio (starring Teresa on Jazz Violin)

Chambers 1 S. Pearl, Albany, 449-3923 cover \$3; higher for special groups. Music on Friday and Saturday. Call for information.

Metro 17 Maple Ave., Saratoga Springs. A two level club.

Usually has Jazz upstairs and "other" downstairs. No phone. Carl Landa and Jill Hughes are the mainstays in the house band with varied artists brought in.

February

1-Doc Scanlon

7-8- Carl Landa

15-16- Upstairs Blues Band w/ McVeede(guitar), Tokarz(sax)

22- Carl Landa Band/w Syracuse and Colarco

23- Carl Landa w/Brignola, Colarco, Syracuse

29- Carl Landa(upstairs)
Doc Scanlon's Rhythm Boys (downstairs)

28- Carl Landa(upstairs)
Doc Scanlon's Rhythm Boys (downstairs)

March

14-Doc Scanlon

L'Ecole Encore 44 Fuller Rd., Albany, 437-1234. Unusual in that it has music during the middle of the week. Check them out on Tues, Wed, Thurs. Call for information.

The Park Bench Cafe, On Rte 7A in Manchester Centre, Vt. (across from Grand Union) 802-362-2557. Music from 8-12pm no cover. Call for information.

14-16-Blues Wing

Duffy's Main St., Bennington, Vt. 802-442-5818. Call for info.

Empire Plaza, Hart Theatre, Call 465-7423

February 23, Dave Bromberg Big Band

We got a letter

This is unusual. Most readers pick up the phone and tell me what's on their mind without bothering to put it down on paper. So I was pleased to hear from Mr. George Hansen. He was responding to my column on segregated Jazz. He was not happy with me discussing these matters and thought that I was making things much worse by doing so.

I responded in part:

"Since I received your letter, I have read it carefully several times. Before I replied, I wanted to be sure I understood the points you raised. I have concluded that what I said needs clarification. Perhaps a column is too brief a format to deal with such complicated issues. So here goes.

1) The article states some of the issues surrounding the early history of Jazz. I would be pleased to recommend several current historical treatments of the era if you do not already have them in your acquaintance. Jazz is a remarkable fusion of European and African musical traditions whose long evolution has witnessed a considerable amount of borrowing back and forth. It is a wonderful example of cultural synthesis and is celebrated all over the world as an American art form.

2) On the other hand, the way

that many of the inventors of this music were treated is also a matter of historical record. Our country has a long history of discrimination based on skin color which I am sure you are aware of. Many talented and creative people have suffered as a consequence. I also believe that we who are of European descent suffered as well from this discrimination. Social and political structures that inhibit the free flow of ideas hurt all of us. My point in this article was to discuss how currents in U.S. history had influenced the history of Jazz.

3) I am not sure where you detected an implication on my part that "some devious racist plot is keeping 'people of color' away from Jazz events" from my statement of the fact that very few people of African descent attended Jazz concerts in this area. It is a mystery to me. The very reason I raised the issue was to get some answers. Any answers out there?

Thanks for your comments.

Sincerely,
Butch Conn
A Place for Jazz

P.S. Have you attended one of our concerts or lectures? If you do, please come up and introduce yourself. Jazz is a great music and worth discussing"

Become a Member!

A Place for Jazz is a membership organization that has two basic goals: **to enlarge the audiences in Northeastern New York for Jazz and to support local Jazz musicians.** We work at these goals by sponsoring a concert series, publishing a newsletter, presenting clinics and workshops in schools and colleges and by publishing a Jazz Calendar for the area. Become a member and provide support for these activities.

Membership brings you the newsletter and a special discount on many of our services. Members are entitled to a discount rate on a first year annual subscription to *Jazz Times* of \$15.00 (a discount of 32%. Just add \$15 to your check and let us know it's to be applied to a *Jazz Times* subscription)

. For a \$100 membership you receive one free series ticket. For \$250 you receive 2 series tickets plus a listing as underwriter for the concert of your choice. At the \$500 level you receive 4 series tickets and listing as sole underwriter for a concert. **Consider buying a membership for friends!**

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Make check to Jazz/Fuss and mail to 1221 Wendell Ave., Schenectady, NY 12308

Marcus Roberts and Ellis Marsalis

A truly wonderful and unique experience is in store for those of you who will be lucky enough to have a ticket to see Marcus Roberts and Ellis Marsalis at Troy Music Hall on February 7. Mr. Marsalis is the father, both biologically and musically, of the Marsalis clan that includes Wynton and Branford. He has been active in Jazz education and performance for over 40 years. He is a thoughtful and creative musician. His album notes on a recent Art Tatum re-issue truly took this writer "back to school" in an assured and pleasant manner.



Marcus Roberts

Mr. Roberts is also one of his musical "children" in that he has the same respect and comprehensive view of the history of Jazz. His recent recording, *"Alone With Three Giants"* is one of those brave pieces of assemblage that you would expect from an older musician.



Ellis Marsalis

In this recording Mr. Roberts lovingly presents and interprets the compositions of Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk.

Treat yourself and a friend to this performance. You won't regret it

Jazzmakers

There is strong interest among musicians in this area to improve the lot of Jazz in Northeastern New York. During the past few weeks they've made that abundantly clear in meeting after meeting throughout the Capital District. A Place for Jazz has acted as a facilitator for those meetings. The goal: to come up with a number of steps these Jazz artists can all agree on to make things better. In the first few meetings suggestions have included:

- developing a better system of promotion for local musicians. Most agreed that taking out ads in newspapers doesn't build audiences. There was discussion of the use of specially designed postcard mailings, developing better mailing lists and getting club owners to try different methods of publicity.
- developing a registry of musicians and leaders with a central phone number. This would help musicians without

their own lists and club owners who are looking for new individuals and groups to book.

- Organizing public jam sessions on at least a monthly basis. This could be done in local clubs or other facility.

Almost everyone agreed that musicians need to be part of the solution. We'll keep you posted as the ideas take shape.

This May Be Your Last Issue, Cont.
you bought a ticket! There's a
membership application on
page 6)

We know you'll miss the Jazz
Calendar*and advance notice of
Jazz happenings in the area.
You won't get Glyn Evans'
wonderful "200 Words", you
won't get notice of special
discounts and you'll miss out
on all the Jazz gossip in the
area. You'll also miss a chance
to build support for the won-
derful Jazz musicians that live
and work in this area. Please
give a second thought to giving
A Place for Jazz your support.
We're a rare, tropical plant
trying to nurture Jazz in a chilly
climate.

We need you!

** You won't get it in the mail, but
APFJ Newsletter can be picked up at
9 Maple Ave., in Saratoga, Records n'
Such in Guilderland, the Open Door
in Schenectady, Justin's in Albany
and we're looking for a place in Troy.
And we'll still mail you our notice of
the concert series in July and Septem-
ber.*

***Warm the
Spirit --
Support
Live Jazz!***

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supported inpart by the First
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Program and membership contri-
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