

## Ray Brown, A Personal Farewell



(c)BRUNI 2002



### Writer Mandy Flowers remembers her mentor, Ray Brown.

By Mandy Flowers

I met ray brown in 1995 at the Stanford Jazz Workshop. We liked each other right away. When I left, I gave him my card, explaining that I lived near the airport and could give him a ride. Less than a month later, when Ray called, I was stunned. He wanted me to do CD sales at his regular week-long Yoshi's engagement. I would get a commission, dinner, and free admission to every show. We spent a lot of time together, as he would sit with me and sign CDs. I remember turning to him at one point and saying, "I'd like you even if you didn't play the bass." His eyes widened and his face lit up in surprised delight.

#### the first lesson

At the end of the week, he invited me for my first private lesson. These were not paid – the subject never came up. I worked hard as his assistant, and the instruction was something he chose to give. What a lesson! Yikes! Ray did not pull his verbal punches. "You *almost* sound like you know what you're doing."

He practically shouted at me to run – not walk – and get myself a classically-trained teacher and learn proper technique. Ray Brown yelling made quite

an impression. I mentioned it later, and he said he had spent the extra time with me earlier so I would know what kind of man he was before the lesson.

#### never too old

I expressed concern that I might be too old to retrain. "How old are you?" he asked. "Twenty nine," I replied. "I have TIES older than you!" He explained that he had already been in his fifties when he retrained his own technique and that I should get over it and begin; playing would be so much easier when I was through. Soon enough, I was able to tell him he'd been absolutely right. When I later advanced, he told me his wish for me was to play at the level of my aspirations. After I began teaching some years later, we compared notes on that too.

Ray was a focused, detail-oriented powerhouse with an astonishing memory. I would get worn out, trying to keep up with him. Behind his commanding presence lurked an effervescent sense of humor just waiting to bubble up, full of surprises. He liked people to push back a little. He could swear fluently, at every other word.

#### a two-way street

His deep growl of a voice, accurately caught on many recordings, would readily break into a giggle. His humility and flexibility amaze me to this day. Over a meal one day, I found a rare chance to land a small potshot. "See," I crowed, "you can learn something from me, too." Seriously, but with a twinkle in his blue eyes, he leaned forward and replied, "I never said it was a one-way street."

I used to drive Ray back to his hotel after the gigs. One night, we were to meet very early the next morning. He wanted me to hand him the bass and rush home to rest, leaving him to struggle up a flight of steep stone stairs with the bass and a bad knee. I refused. Picture the scene – in

the middle of the night, Ray Brown wants his bass right now and the answer is "no." Again, that incredulous look, but he ceded gracefully, and I ran the bass up the stairs.

The next morning, while I was pouring milk on my cereal, he said, "I'd have the perfect job for you if you were a boy." Now there's a statement guaranteed to spark a lively conversation. If he'd seriously thought that, the topic wouldn't have come up, but that's how he introduced the idea that he might need help after knee replacement surgery. Apparently, my stairs trek had inspired the unlikely thought to hire a girl 40 years his junior to carry equipment. After long consideration, he did, and flew me out to the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival for a week as a roadie. Now *that's* flexibility!

#### goodbye

Ray passed away July 2, 2002. I last saw him on May 19, as driver/roadie for a local performance. As it was only he and I in the van, we had a great chance to have a good visit. I regularly had a little list of questions for him, either about music or life, and as usual he patiently considered them one by one, dispensing his unique brand of no-nonsense advice. When we said goodbye at the airport, he said, "Thanks, you've been a doll, as always."

Ray, thank you so much for enriching my life and art for seven years. You've been a doll, too.

*Mandy Flowers is a graduate of Berklee College in Boston, and was fortunate enough to study with Ray Brown and Charlie Haden. She performs full-time and offers technical and spiritual bass instruction. She can be reached via [mandyflowers.com](http://mandyflowers.com) or 650-616-9408.*

### In Memory of Ray Brown

ray brown, who passed away on july 2, had been scheduled to play at Yoshi's July 9 through 14. The performances that week were accordingly transformed into a tribute to Ray Brown, with local musician and composer Marcus Shelby filling in on bass. Marcus had the following to say about Ray:

"Ray Brown redefined the role of the bass chair. His innovative melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic concept was an extension and progression of Jimmy Blanton and Oscar Pettiford and set the standard for every bassist who came after."

"The first bass method book I studied was written by Ray Brown, the first record I transcribed was an Oscar Peterson record featuring Ray Brown, and my first bass teacher I studied with was John Clayton, who was a student of Ray Brown. Even though I did not know Ray personally, I feel like I've lost a musical father and teacher."

*Painting (c)BRUNI 2002 from The Jazz Masters Series by BRUNI. BRUNI Gallery, Campbell, CA (408) 370-4700, [www.brunijazzart.com](http://www.brunijazzart.com). BRUNI is the featured cover story in the August issue of JAZZIZ magazine.*

# jazz steps: Welcome



One of the last recordings of Gil Evans is a bootleg of him with Sting at the Umbria Jazz Festival in Perugia, Italy in 1987, *Last Session*, also featuring Branford Marsalis.

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## Editor's Note

well, it's august, just one more month until summer either starts or ends, depending on whether you're in the City or not. ;-) The festivals are in full swing, and there's something for every corner of the Bay area: the North Beach Jazz Festival, the San Jose Jazz Festival, Jazz in Flight's Eddie Moore Jazz Festival in Oakland, plus the wrap-up of the Stanford Jazz Festival and SFJAZZ's ongoing free summer concert series (see our articles on the first three festivals, and our calendar on page 10 for the latter two events).

On a more somber note, the jazz world lost an icon this past month, and Ray Brown will be missed by countless Bay area musicians and fans alike. His student and friend, Mandy Flowers remembers him on our front page this month, along with Marcus Shelby, who was influenced and inspired by Brown's work. Peninsula artist Bruni captured Ray's personality so beautifully in her portrait of him, I'm grateful to her for sharing that with us.

This issue is a bit of an arts renaissance. In addition to Bruni's painting, we have great poems about jazz by renowned poet A.D. Winans, illustrated by amazing photographs by Lee Tanner. Again, I'm very grateful for these artists sharing their work with us!

I had the opportunity to be present for the interview of legendary jazz poet

ruth weiss by current day jazz poets Raymond Nat Turner and Zigi Lowenberg of Upsurge for this issue. It was a real meeting of the minds, as everything from jazz, poetry, art, acceptance, rebellion, ethnicity, gentrification, and women's roles in the Beat scene were discussed.

I used to see ruth perform at the old Gathering Café in North Beach, and at age 74, she's still as busy as ever. She even graciously agreed to do a guest reading at an Upsurge benefit at Ashkenaz on July 28.

As the interview wrapped up, Raymond commented, "One of the things that's so incredible just watching and checking you out is that you keep rolling," to which ruth responded, "Poetry is my life. I can't give a little here and a little there. I'm an all the way kind of person." And the Beat goes on...

-Mary Destri



Photo by Scott Chernis

**Correction:** In our June issue, in our article regarding Yoshi's anniversary, we erroneously stated that Yoshi's and the Blue Note had collaborated for a couple of years, which was incorrect. We apologize for this error!

## JAZZSTEPS

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## Jazz Steps Submissions

If you would like to submit your writing, photographs or artwork in Jazz Steps, please contact our Editor, Mary Destri, at mary@jazzsteps.com.



# ALL THAT JAZZ! Smith Dobson & The San Jose Jazz Fest

By Jesse "Chuy" Varela

It was over a year ago (4/20/01) that South bay pianist-singer Smith Dobson was tragically killed in a late night auto accident on Highway 85 as he was returning home to Santa Cruz from a gig. It shocked the jazz community and the Bay Area lost one of its brilliant figures. What the 54 year-old brought as a player, teacher and advocate, was a passionate drive to enrich and enlighten peoples lives with jazz music. It reflects in his own immediate family with wife Gail, an accomplished jazz singer, and their children, Sasha and Smith Jr., following in their footsteps.

As the 13th Annual San Jose Jazz Festival swings into action, Smith continues to be a beacon as one of the original co-founders of what is now considered the country's "largest free jazz festival." Last year, he was honored with a stage in his name and continues into this year. The idea is to give forum to great and unsung resident talent. From veterans like Mark Levine to young bucks like Taylor Eigsti, he taught, motivated and encouraged people to play with an organic spirit that was playful yet intellectual.

Straight up Smith put South bay jazz on the map. Much like the Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, The Jazz & Blues Company in Carmel and Pete Douglas' Bach, Dancing & Dynamite Society in Half Moon Bay, he started an outpost at his Garden City home base that widens the sphere of where world-class jazz musicians could play that went beyond San Francisco.

Smith was born in Stockton, California and got his love of music from both his parents. Latin and jazz standards were the forte of his mother Norma Gonzales Dobson, a singer of Mexican descent. His father was an American who played jazz piano and accordion. Dobson attended San Francisco State College and University of the Pacific. He was recruited into the Airmen of Note, the US Air Force's premier jazz band, in 1967.

Moving back to San Francisco after his hitch, he soon became a first call pianist who played and recorded with stars like Cannonball and Nat Adderly, Joe Pass, Arthur Prysock, Clark Terry, Joe Williams, Nancy Wilson, Woody Shaw, Bud Shank, Frank Rosolino, Freddie Hubbard, Pharoah Sanders, Joe Henderson, Art Pepper, Bobby McFerrin, Van Morrison, Richie Cole, Eddie Jefferson, Mark Murphy, Stan Getz and Bobby Hutcherson.

In 1981, he began San Jose's longest running and most successful Jazz Series at the Garden City Restaurant.

Together with his wife Gail the gig lasted 20 years and brought through an array of jazz greats, many of which he would accompany. He was part of the original group of jazz lovers that started the San Jose Jazz Society in 1986 and brought into being a non-profit whose mission is to bring Jazz to the

Silicon Valley through performance and education.

Smith served as a catalyst on its board of directors. He received lifetime achievement awards from the SJSJ and the Monterey Jazz Festival. The entire family was honored by the city of Santa Cruz in January 2001. He was also on the board of the Stanford Jazz Alliance and Kuumbwa Jazz Center as well as teaching at UC Santa Cruz and San Jose State.

Once called the "Bay Area's Frank Sinatra," now his numerous albums and CDs serve as reminders of this gifted man as a sideman and leader. *Smithsonian, Live at Garden City*, and *Sasha Bossa* were all self-produced efforts available on CD now. But the Dobson legacy hasn't ended, with daughter Sasha now in NYC and about to release her debut album, *Detour Ahead* (Small's), and Smith Jr., who plays vibes and drums, gigging around town with Joshi Marshal and others. Gail continues to occasionally perform and teach. Smith lives!



Scott Chernis

This year the Smith Dobson Stage will be situated on Park Avenue in a patio area behind the San Jose Tech Museum and will host an impressive cast of Bay Area pianists and singers who definitely emulate the spirit that he had for playing, singing and advancing jazz (see schedule).

*smith* continued on page 11

## FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

Main Stage (Plaza de Cesar Chavez)  
5:30 Quetzal  
7:30 Los Hombres Calientes

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

Main Stage (Plaza de Cesar Chavez)  
12:00 The 50 Voice Oakland Jazz Choir  
2:00 John Santos and the Machete Ensemble  
4:00 Larry Coryell  
6:00 George Duke Quartet

Smith Dobson Stage (Park Avenue)

1:00 The Art Hirahara Trio  
3:00 Matt Clark (piano) Quartet  
5:00 Larry Vuckovich Trio  
7:00 Mark Levine and the Latin Tinge.

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

Main Stage (Plaza de Cesar Chavez)  
12:00 Montclair Women's Big Band  
2:00 Jon Faddis  
4:00 Chuchito Valdes Afro Cuban Ensemble  
6:00 Oleta Adams

Smith Dobson Stage (Park Avenue)

1:00 Leonard Thompson  
3:00 Shanna Carlson Quintet  
5:00 Dick Hindman

# Eddie Moore Jazz Festival

## JOHN-CARLOS PEREA QUARTET WILL OPEN THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL.



By Wanda Sabir

Jazz in flight's 13th annual Eddie Moore Jazz Festival is almost upon us, Thursday through Saturday, August 8-17. The line-up this year is in keeping with the high standards that have made this festival one of the most well-respected in the country. These high standards are also a key reason why JIF, an all-volunteer organization, has been around for as long as it has.

Founder Ken Schubert explained that JIF started in 1975 with a small group of musicians and people who loved the music. He had a large loft at 115 Main Street in San Francisco, where they presented music almost every night - sometimes twice a day.

"We continued doing that at the loft until 1979 when we lost our lease, and we became what I call 'the road show.' We played in churches, bars and galleries. At that time, it

was called Bay Area Loft Jazz. Then in, I think it was 1982, we merged with the San Francisco Jazz Foundation, and the name became the Bay Area Jazz Society. I directed Loft Jazz, and I directed Jazz Society until I retired in 1986. Then the organization went belly up."

The following year, Schubert was approached by a friend who had a dance studio. "Dance in Flight was in the school across the street from Mission Dolores Park. Well, that's where Jazz in Flight was conceived." Schubert and friends decided to revive the all-volunteer organization, which they named Jazz in Flight.

"We started at Kimball's in San Francisco when they first opened, then we moved to the east bay and became involved with the old Iota's on Claremont. Again I directed JIF, the majority of the first years, then in 1997, I stepped down to vice presidency. I wanted someone else to learn to do all those things, but I've been heavily involved ever since. Now Bruce Pizzichillo is president, with Chris White as treasurer."

Early on, JIF co-founder Jessica Felix started a children's program, Children in Flight. These free music workshops are for children 5-15 years old, and are taught by Tacuma King at the Alice Arts Center in Oakland on Saturdays.

Named after Bay area drummer Eddie Moore, who suffered a fatal stroke on Yoshi's bandstand, the Festival this year has a new concert home - two homes in fact. The venues are the Oakland Asian Cultural Center's 350-seat theatre, located in the Pacific Renaissance Plaza, 2nd Floor, 388 9th Street, and the Ex'pression Center for New Media, a 200 seat Meyer Sound Performance Hall, 6601 Shellmound Street, Emeryville.

OAC, which is accessible from the downtown Oakland BART station, will host the first five shows. The other three will be hosted by Ex'pression Center for New Media, a short ride away from the West MacArthur

BART station on the free Emery-go-Round shuttle.

When I ask Schubert how the season gelled for JIF, he said that he, the president and treasurer sat around and tossed suggested in the hat of groups they'd like to see at JIF this year.

"We sort of picked some of our favorite bands and went after them," Schubert says. "It ended up bringing all saxophone players - the leaders were all saxophone players, or saxophones are featured in every band. Most of the players are from the east coast and they don't get out here that often, so I'm really looking forward to it."

"The first five nights will be at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center. I really enjoy

working with the people at the Cultural Center and at Ex'pression. We featured Kimara there, and we collaborated with the Asian American Jazz Festival there as well."

"We open with a band that has played with for us in the past, John-Carlos Perea Quartet, featuring Francisco Wong on the saxophones. Carlos is American Indian, and we wanted to see if we could get saxophonist Burt Wilson, a former Bay area resident, down from Seattle, but [confined to a wheelchair all his life] he's not traveling any longer. Anyway, Francis Wong is in that band [instead]."

One hears Perea's Native American roots in the opening cut on his debut album *First Dance*, with Wong featured in a beautiful solo - part two of "Three Things" for Phil McGee (former dean of the Ethnic Studies Department at San Francisco State University, where Perea got his degree.)

This Bay area band is followed the next day by "The Cosmosomatics," featuring Michael Marcus and Sonny Simmons on saxes, Tarus Mateen on bass and Jay Rosen on drums. Both Marcus and Simmons once called this area home, so the concert will be a rare opportunity to drop by and say hi to two great musicians, as well as learn how to pronounce the group's name. This is a west coast debut.

Hamiett Bluiett (reeds), D.D. Jackson (keyboards) and Kahil El'Zabar (drums/percussions) are the headline show of the

festival Saturday, August 10. Ken Schubert said that earlier this year he had wanted to invite the entire World

Saxophone Quartet, but when the organization (JIF) moved away from Yoshi's, where

there was a built-in audience, JIF decided not to do anything on such a large scale. "I decided to just invite WSQ member Bluiett, and he was very enthusiastic about bringing a trio. That trio has recorded - they have a CD out."

When asked about D.D. Jackson, Shubert replied, "He's a pianist out of Canada, a Don Pullen protégé. In fact, Don was supposed to do a concert in Montana, and he died the night before the concert, so D.D. Jackson took his place. He plays organ and those electric instruments that sound like organs."

El'Zabar, just awarded the "Percussionist of the Year" award June 19 by the Jazz Journalists Association, has a new album out August 27 - *Love Outside Dreams* on Delmark with David Murray on sax and Fred Hopkins on bass.

*moore* continued on page 5



Vivendo de Pao's follow-up to their debut CD *Terreiro de Sao Francisco*, entitled *Scratch Cooking Volume 1*, was recorded in Kevin Welch's living room.

Tickets for the Latin Jazz Series and A Taste of New Orleans can be purchased at [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com) or without surcharge at the North Beach Jazz Festival and Gallery office at 2810 Leavenworth Avenue in the Cannery. For additional information, visit or call the store at 415-771-2061, or check out their website at [www.nbjazzfest.org](http://www.nbjazzfest.org).



## The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual North Beach

### JAZZ FESTIVAL



Photos by Scott Chernis

### Celebrating the Cultural Heritage of the City

By Rob Woodworth

the cafés, restaurants, and parks in historic north beach are again about to be filled with the sounds of jazz. The espresso, the wine, the pasta, all evoking the feel of romantic Italy, will soon be complimented by the sights and sounds of the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual North Beach Jazz Festival.

Not just any jazz festival, but a festival with some of the best jazz talent on the scene today. Running August 7 through August 11, the festival covers all types of jazz, from Latin to New Orleans.

#### jazz for a new generation

The festival is known for promoting jazz to new listeners and a new generation. "This is not your father's jazz festival," explains co-founder Alistar Monroe. Continuing with its grassroots feel, the festival promotes primarily local talent.

Co-founder Herve Ernest remembers the days at a club in Manhattan when the DJ suggested he listen to an album called *Giant Steps*. Little did he know, John Coltrane's *Giant Steps* would set his life on a course in jazz that he is still pursuing today. "If it wasn't for that DJ in Manhattan, I may have never been introduced to jazz." Therefore, Ernest hopes to introduce jazz to many more young people by creating a festival that focuses on a younger demographic.

#### the party

To kick off this year's festival, opening night August 7 kicks off with "Jazz on Grant Block Party." And that it is! This all-ages opening night free event is a tribute to North Beach's glorious past, when jazz spilled out into the streets from every corner café. Over 25 bars and cafes throughout the neighborhood will open

their doors and celebrate jazz history. Some of this evening's performers include the Marcus Shelby Jazz Orchestra at the St. Francis of Assisi Church, as well as the Michael Bluestein Quartet, the Calvin Keys Trio, and the Freddy Williams Quartet. Shows start at 7:00. Did I mention it is all free?

#### thursday

Thursday evening, August 8, Richard Howell and Oriente Lopez will headline the Latin Jazz Series, consistently one of the festival's most popular events. Bay Area saxophonist Richard Howell brings a wide spectrum of music to the festival. While working with such greats as Etta James, Don Cherry, and Billy Higgins, Howell's sound has been described as powerful, yet sensual. Havana-born Oriente Lopez has earned the respect of the worldwide jazz community through his achievements as a flautist, pianist, composer, arranger, orchestrator and musical director. This show at Broadway Studios is \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door (21 and over).

#### friday

On Friday evening, August 9, the festival brings Cajun, blues, and a traditional brass band sound for a "Taste of New Orleans." Three fabulous bands make up this bill, including Juice, the Critical Brass Band, and the Brotherhood of Groove. Straight from the clubs of New Orleans comes Juice, who last year performed at over 130 clubs and festivals in the Southeast. Their sound includes jazz, funk, and classic New Orleans R&B. After being invited to play the New Orleans' Jazz and Heritage Festival, Telluride Weekly described them as "the real, raw deal."

Also featured on this same ticket is the Brotherhood of Groove. With that name and their latest CD entitled *A Pocket Full of Funk*, that pretty much sums it up. The band features former Sun Ra trumpeter Michael Ray, as well as the remarkable tenor sax of John Ellis of the Charlie Hunter Quartet. This show is also at Broadway Studios with a ticket

price of \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door (21 and over).

#### saturday

Closing out the festival will be two free days of magnificent jazz sounds in the gorgeous Washington Square Park. On Saturday, August 10, a Bay Area favorite, Anibade featuring Ledisi, will return to the festival stage. After a recent tour in Japan, they bring their soulful R&B vibe to the heart of North Beach. Also on Saturday, Sovoso will bring a unique treat to the festival. This group is an a cappella "Bobby McFerrin-like" ensemble that sings a unique, rhythmic mix of jazz, gospel, and world music. And if this wasn't already enough to squeeze into one day, Saturday is tightly packaged with Mingus and Miles in the form of Mingus Amungus and Bitches Brew.

#### sunday

Sunday closes the festival in grand style. Curiosity alone should get the best of you when artist Josh Jones is described as having "influences that range from traditional jazz to the 'get down' ethnic influences of today's cross-cultural amalgamations..." This performance will be followed by the Cuban sounds of Fito Reinoso. Closing the day and the festival is the high-energy, Bay Area favorite Vivendo de Pao (see sidebar). This is Brazilian jazz at its best – or as Monroe guarantees, "This is not a sit down show...you will dance."

Both Saturday and Sunday are free for all ages and run from 11:00 – 6:00 in Washington Square Park.

"Our purpose is to bring people together to celebrate the cultural heritage of this city – North Beach in particular." Says Monroe. They have certainly accomplished that goal. With the help of sponsors such as Stella Artois, SFWeekly, and Robert Mondavi, last year's festival hosted over 60,000 people.

*Rob Woodworth is an avid jazz fan and drummer who is looking forward to getting even more involved in the Bay Area music community. He also enjoys Evil Knievel, professional wrestling, and coffee.*

### Vivendo de Pao Headlines NBJF Jazz in the Park

By Rob Woodworth

since 1996, *vivendo de pao* has been putting the groove into Brazilian beats throughout the Bay area. Best described as Brazilian, funk, and jazz improvisation, *Vivendo* consistently brings the crowds to their feet.

Founder Kevin Welch was greatly influenced by the music he heard while living in a thatched roof hut along the Amazon River. He brought this sound back to the Bay Area, spiced it up with a little improv, and there you have the recipe for one tight groove.

The diverse talent and experience that is found in *Vivendo's* members speaks for itself. Welch fronts the group with a soft melodic voice that dances over the beats in perfect rhythm. Besides singing and playing guitar, Welch writes most of the songs that *Vivendo* performs. By adding three new members to the mix, and a having a new recording on the way, "we are directing our energy in a more productive way...adding keyboards, trap drums, and pandeiro; a tambourine-like drum," adds Welch.

Tenor saxophonist Richard Howell brings tons of experience to the *Vivendo* stage. Howell's resume includes vocalist, composer, arranger, educator, and producer. Howell has performed worldwide, and is the founder of the R.C. Howell Music Production Company.

Longtime members include David Ewell on the acoustic bass, Walter Mackins on percussion and surdo (bass drums) and Eddie Torres on congas, caixa, tamborim, agogo, and trap drums. The three newest members are Darrel Green on trap drums, Alex Calatayud on pandeiro, and Jacob Aginsky on keyboards.

After performing in bars and clubs for years, frontman Welch recalls a highlight of *Vivendo's* musical evolution, "We played Davies Symphony Hall on a Latin night for symphony members. And after each song there was clap, clap, clap...and then silence...it was great...no bar sounds!". Welch is looking forward to returning to North Beach, where the band got their start, to perform at the North Beach Jazz Festival. "North Beach Jazz Fest was one of the first festivals we ever played...and it was something like 10:00 in the morning on a Saturday...now we're headlining..."

The name *Vivendo De Pao* translates to "living off bread" or "barely scraping by". But after two dynamic CD's and countless live shows, this band's sounds are far from "scraping by" – their food pantry is bursting at the seams with a spicy hot Brazilian flavor.

*Vivendo de Pao plays a free concert on Sunday, August 11 in Washington Square Park in San Francisco as part of the North Beach Jazz Festival. For more information, visit the band's site at [www.vivendodepao.com](http://www.vivendodepao.com) or the festival site at [www.nbjazzfest.org](http://www.nbjazzfest.org).*



# SFJAZZ All-Star High School Ensemble Takes Flight

By Jerry Karp

OUTSIDE THE MASONIC AUDITORIUM before Wynton Marsalis' June 14 SFJAZZ concert, the SFJAZZ All-Star High School Ensemble is swinging hard. Jazz fans moving across the theater's marble terrace stop to check out the music, and many seem surprised and then charmed to discover that the hearty big band sound is being supplied by a group of teenagers. It soon becomes evident that these young players are making no concessions to their age. The ensemble work is crisp, the solos are accomplished and fervent, and the spirited enthusiasm is tempered by an unmistakable professionalism. Their repertoire displays a wide range of styles, starting with Ellington.

Band director Dr. Dee Spencer takes it all in with obvious pride. This is, in fact, the next to last performance by this first edition of the ensemble. The seniors have already graduated, and Spencer will be starting over in the fall with this year's lower class members plus the survivors of the open auditions to be held this September. For now, though, she's enjoying this year's accomplishment.

This band, first started in April 2001, has been together the length of a school year. They've experienced a lot together, including workshops with some of the leading jazz players and educators in the world, a performance at Yoshi's and, perhaps most memorably, a trip to New York City to compete in the Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition at Lincoln Center. Along the way, the band has emerged as a flagship for the growing SFJAZZ education program.

## dee spencer's band

The ensemble is the brainchild of Dr. Spencer, an accomplished jazz educator and an active musician. A partial list of Spencer's credentials includes assistant professorships at UMass Boston, Berklee School of Music and Dartmouth and her current professorship at SFSU. Until recently, she was the Director of Education Programs for SFJAZZ, and she remains the band's director.

"About five years ago," she recalled recently, "I directed the Regional Grammy Band for a program sponsored by NARAS (National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences). The program was similar to what we're doing here, but it didn't have the support it needed. When I started working with SFJAZZ, I remembered how outstanding this kind of band could be for students. It's labor-intensive, but it's not a program that costs an arm and a leg. So it's a win-win for everyone."

The band draws musicians from across the Bay Area, from as far as Moraga and San Jose. To get the best players she can, Spencer maintains contacts with high school band directors, asking them to encourage their star players to audition. To make this work, however, she has to ensure that the ensemble's schedule allows her musicians to continue to perform with their own high school bands.

And because her musicians have other commitments, Spencer only gets them for rehearsals once a week. That makes it vital that she start with students who are already excellent players.

"I go with the best musicians who walk into the audition, and the best readers," she says. "I have good players who still might get better, but you've got to be amazing to get in. I'm basically fine-tuning and crafting. Getting them to play together, making sure the repertoire shows off their strengths. But I can't teach them how to play their instruments."

The benefits for students who do get in are considerable. They are able to play with other young musicians who match their own talent



The SFJAZZ All-Star High School Ensemble competing at the Essentially Ellington contest at Lincoln Center.

Photo by Joe Salerno

and commitment levels. They also get to play with and learn from the high-powered guest musicians SFJAZZ can bring in for workshops. This year, those guests included Branford Marsalis, Russell Gunn and Stefon Harris.

## ellington competition

Another highlight this first year was that trip to New York for the annual Ellington Competition at Lincoln Center. The SFJAZZ ensemble was one of 15 finalists out of 149 entries invited to make the trip and perform.

"We arranged a recording session to make an audition tape," Spencer related. "That itself was a good experience for everybody. But then we got selected to go to New York, and I said, 'Oh, no.' It wasn't budgeted for. How are we going to go? We had to raise some money real fast, but people came through for us. It was amazing. Our scheduled date at Yoshi's turned into a benefit that raised a lot of money. And we made it."

"We were one of the few groups to make the finals on their first try," she continued. "Most groups take years and years of entering and being rejected. Suddenly we're competing in the big time. We're on the stage of Lincoln Center. We went from the steps of the Masonic Auditorium to Lincoln Center. Other than Yoshi's, we'd hardly even played on a real stage. But it was great. Our trombone player and drummer received honorable mentions as outstanding soloists, but most importantly, we got in there and played very, very well."

The individuals honored were Nicholas DePinna for Outstanding Soloist, trombone, and Bram Kincheloe, Soloist Honorable Mention, drums.

## enjoying the music

With all the perks and adventures, Spencer asserts that the most important element of the ensemble is making sure the students enjoy the experience and increase their love for the music.

"Once you have a tradition," she says, "especially a tradition of excellence, people really rise to the occasion. There's a lot of sacrifice, but I'm a firm believer that the band has to be fun. If you mess up, you mess up. But you don't get arrested."

Although the full ensemble has had its last performance of the year, there's still a chance to see band members playing together in combo settings throughout the summer and into November, through the Pan Pacific Hotel San Francisco's monthly Master Series, an annual program combining jazz and visual art. Each month, the hotel presents an exhibition of work by an artist representing a

local gallery. Combos featuring musicians from the SFJAZZ All-Star High School Ensemble perform at each opening, and 10 percent of the proceeds raised from art sales throughout the program are donated to the band. The August opening, (Thursday August 15 from 5:50 to 7:30) will feature painter Catherine Mackey of HANG Gallery.

Free open auditions for the 2002-2003 edition of the SFJAZZ All-Star High School Ensemble will take place Saturday, September 14, 10 am to 3 pm at the Pan Pacific's Executive Conference Center, 500 Post Street at Mason. All instruments are welcome. Visit [www.sfjazz.org](http://www.sfjazz.org), or call (415) 398-5655, for more information.

*A freelance writer and former jazz radio producer for WWNO in New Orleans, Jerry Karp provides copywriting services for artists and arts-related businesses through his business, Rocket Words ([www.rocketwords.com](http://www.rocketwords.com)).*

## Summer Jazz Youth Program Underway at Berkeley's Jazzschool

Student musicians preparing to enter grades 6-8 still have time to register for the August session of the Jazzschool's Summer Youth Program. Young musicians will receive in-depth instruction on a wide range of musical categories from a world-class faculty. Class subjects include Jazz Ensemble, Latin Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, Theory/Ear Training, Vocals, Rhythm Class and Jazz Piano/Salsa Piano. The Summer Youth Program represents an excellent opportunity for young students to learn about jazz in an environment designed to be enjoyable, yet intensive – a lot of learning and a lot of fun.

Classes for the August session will take place Monday through Thursday, August 5-8 and 12-15, with a class recital on Friday, August 16. Students attend six 55-minute classes each day from 9 am to 12 noon and from 1 to 4 pm, with a supervised lunch break from 12 noon to 1 pm. All classes are taught at the Jazzschool, 2087 Addison Street, in the heart of the Downtown Berkeley's growing Arts District. The two-week program costs \$500.

Students entering the program will find themselves in a rich musical and learning environment. The Jazzschool is the only institution of its kind in the Bay Area, offering a broad spectrum of performance and lecture classes, short-term workshops and private instruction to musicians of all levels and ages. Everyone from professional musicians and serious students to amateur jazz aficionados take advantage of the school's excellent and diverse curriculum and the world-class faculty.

Prospective students are asked to schedule an audition appointment or telephone consultation so they can be placed in the class level most appropriate to their ability and experience. The faculty takes care to ensure that the auditions are student-friendly to keep anxiety down to a minimum. Parents may make audition appointments for the young musician in the family by calling the Jazzschool at (510) 845-5373.

For more information about the Summer Youth Program, visit [www.jazzschool.com](http://www.jazzschool.com), or e-mail [swing@jazzschool.com](mailto:swing@jazzschool.com). **Jerry Karp**

## Eddie Moore Jazz Festival

*moore continued from page 3*

this spring, Eastside Arts Alliance hosted Bluiett, El'Zabar and violinist Billy Bang, in an intimate evening of music "down under." The concert was a prelude to the Malcolm X Jazz Arts Festival this past May. The funky space lent an intensity to a set where children giggled and wailed in time with Bang, who strummed his violin like a guitar. Bluiett on baritone saxophone and wooden flute was a weighty presence, while El'Zabar sang, chanted and grooved on multiple percussion instruments, which included the kalimba or thumb piano. Their trio's album, *If You Believe* (8th Harmonic Breakdown, 2002) is a shared venture – all the men contributed original work.

On Sunday, August 11, it's Ben Allison & Medicine Wheel, with two shows, 7 and 9 p.m. Allison is on bass, with Tomas Ulrich on cello, Michael Black on saxophone, Frank Kimbrough on piano and Mike Sarin on drums.

The Festival skips a few days and then resumes on Thursday, Aug. 15 Marty Ehrlich Quartet featuring Ehrlich, Craig Taborn (piano), Michael Formanek (bass) Gerald Cleaver (drums).

Michael Formanek is a longtime friend of Schubert, who "lived here before he

went to live back east. When I had the loft in San Francisco," Schubert says, "(Formanek) was in Dave Liebman's band. They played at the Loft on a regular basis. That's how I got to know him, so it's going to be great to see him again."

On Friday, August 16, the Festival moves over to Ex'pression Center for New Media, with Tim Berne (saxophone), Michael Formanek (bass), and special guest pianist Craig Taborn performing.

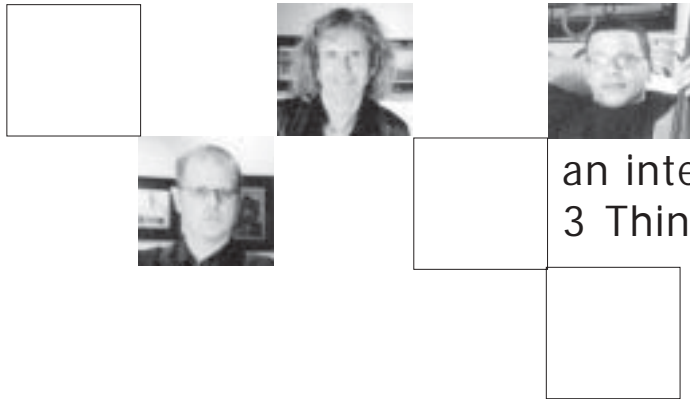
Ellery Eskelin closes this year out Saturday, August 17 also at Ex'pression. His band also has the only woman in this year's festival, Andrea Parkins on accordion. The other member of the trio is Jim Black on drums, "a fine drummer, who's not well known on the west coast. Their music is very interesting."

When asked how this festival differed from those in the past, Schubert said that the main difference was size. "We're not certain about the attendance at these new venues, so we couldn't afford to spend a lot of money for larger units. That's why we have quartets and trios this year. If we do well this year, we'll be back again doing larger units. I know it's great working at the Asian Cultural Center. Next year, we'd like to do all of our festival there just to have it all in one place."



Eric Dolphy's first recording on the Blue Note label in 1964, *Out to Lunch*, unfortunately turned out to be his last, due to his untimely death later that year.

# Redefining Restaurant Jazz



an interview with  
3 Thinking

By Philip Gordon

In the music business, occasionally there is music you want to check out and write about, music that means something to you and your world. Music that excites you and then mellows you out and then drives you into a frenzy at the same time. In these times of increasing categorization and rigid formatting, 3 Thinking are challenging the trends and showcasing the talents of three individual musical personalities.

3 Thinking is comprised of Terence Disley on piano, Eric Kurtzrock on drums, and Gary Brown on bass. The final mix is a heady, exciting blend of Jazz, Rock, Classical, Reggae, and Latin influences. I visited with them recently at their regular weekly venue, Don Johnson's restaurant and lounge, Ana Mandara, on Beach Street in San Francisco, to find out what was on their minds and "stoke the buzz."

Musically, my expectations were right-on, as I had heard Terry and Eric some time ago at another venue and, the impression was made: these two guys had fire in their hearts about this music. Now, it was obvious that with the steady gig, and the addition of Gary Brown on bass, they had really honed their sound. The material was fresh and crisp, and created an atmosphere that charged the ambiance of this place. The audience was attentive and definitely "dialed in" with the jazz grooves 3 Thinking were laying down.

Terry's original melody lines and improvisations, on one of the most beautiful grand pianos I've ever seen, were marvelous juxtapositions, reminiscent of jazz greats Evans and Tyner, layered with a rock groove. And Eric, heh... is Art Blakey in the house? The guy is hard-bop hip, great textures and dynamics, wonderful arrangements on some Latin and jazz/rock driving material that really showcased his creative and technical gifts. The guy is intense!

PG: How did you come up with the name 3 Thinking?

TD: We initially were looking for a name that would have some crossover, because if you say that so-and-so band is just a trio, for instance, then it really doesn't speak about what they're doing musically...it's a very appropriate name for what we are about conceptually.

EK: Exactly, we come from three completely different musically places...it's still jazz...but different places, the moment we starting playing we felt we really hit on something unique...something all three of us had a part of.

PG: When you first got together you were playing one kind of music, jazz standards. Now in the three years that you guys have been together, how has the music evolved?

TD: At first, we did a lot of pop covers, Pink Floyd, etc. to grab people's attention and jazz standards, which we would improvise on. We all have a lot history playing that kind of music, and we enjoyed playing jazz, but lately, I've written most of the music that we play

now. It's a combination of jazz and rock stuff, but now we don't do as much of other peoples' music. It's more of our own original stuff.

PG: I noticed earlier you had done some arrangements on some standard jazz material in the first set....

EK: Actually those arrangements, more or less, have come about by just playing on those tunes so much, it's very natural for us to work on a tune, and since we know each other really well, we arrange on the spot as the song evolves...every time we play a tune something new is discovered with the material.

PG: In that context, do either one of you set the musical direction, or is it a collaboration?

EK: Terry writes a lot of the music, but, both Gary and I have a lot to say about how it's going to sound and how it turns out...our first album we be mostly Terry's music, primarily out of necessity and practicality, because he is such a prolific writer, we're just keeping up and making contributions as we feel it would collectively enhance the sound of the tunes.

TD: The compositions and the music we play are both about the direction we are trying to go musically.

PG: In that regard, what is influencing you, Terry, on this first album?

TD: Actually, everything that we've been through, as individuals, all of us carry a lot of musical history of playing with a lot of different people over the years, but we are so busy right now, and so involved in what we're doing, that primarily I just listen to us, every week we tape our gigs, and we'll all be listening to them during the week, and then we'll work on them.

EK: I'd have to say our new stuff is somewhere between Weather Report and Hard Bop, Some of our straight ahead stuff is right out of the Hard Bop school, you know, Art Blakey and McCoy Tyner...rhythm section oriented, fiery straight-ahead, and then ballads like Bill Evans used to do. Terry has written some beautiful ballads...but we really keep finding our way back to the hard bop stuff, Art Blakey was one of my teachers, and I find it odd that after all these years we are coming back to this form of music...this niche...it's such a treat!

PG: What about the gear you use...I heard earlier that Don Johnson went out and bought an \$80,000 piano for the restaurant... that must be great coming to work?

TD: That's right, Don went out and bought one of the best pianos in the city, spent \$80,000, on a Bosendorfer, and, I also use the Kurzweil K2000, which I brought in, but we don't have a lot of room here as you can see, so, we also are use a loop station, when we spin some loops into some of our reggae tunes...we are gradually getting more technical with the music as time goes on.

EK: As far as drums are concerned, they are old school traditional, real open-sound, no stuffing the bass, all Turkish symbols, that produce a really dark sound. (Gary Brown is off to New York tonight, playing at the Blue Note.)

PG: In a restaurant environment like this, obviously very high-end, what kind of an audience are you playing to?

EK: Well, normally we do a lot of ballads and play a softer first set...but it was kind of raucous in there tonight, so we were hitting it pretty hard early. Usually we do that in our second and third sets.

TD: When this place first opened, it was like an open-book, people didn't expect a lot from the restaurant band, but now, that's changed, we've got quite a lot of people coming back in, specially for the band, and we've been getting quite a lot of attention, so now on good nights, it's more like a gig than playing in a restaurant. It's been voted the premier lounge for jazz in San Francisco.

PG: Do you have any tours scheduled, or any favorite cities you would like to play?

TD: Nothing right now, but if we get back to my hometown London, I'd like to play again at Ronnie Scott's place, and generally start working in Europe as well as working here.

EK: Right now we are focused on getting this next album together...we've been working here for two years, they let us come and go, they are extremely low-maintenance venue as far as clients go, they like just having the one band, since we are developing a following, and people are coming in to hear us play. It's not like most places where you have this bizarre weekly mix of five different bands coming in, that brings in very different types of people and that would be very disruptive to this atmosphere. Radio play is one of our next goals, we've done some interviews, and we were just filmed in a documentary show with Eddie Henderson, another show with Eddie, will be happening again August 9th, and then two Thursdays of every month, hopefully starting in September, we are going to be importing some people here, some horn players, like Craig Handy, from Herbie Hancock's Band, and vocalist Mary Stallings.

PG: I wouldn't mind sitting in for that one...What's next for the band?

TD: Get the next album out, then airplay...and then we shop for a licensing deal and set our first tour.

EK: Absolutely, we are madly insane about this project, equally. We get up everyday and call each other, to find out what's going on, it's very intense at this moment...and the addition of Peter Casey as our manager has really contributed and created a lot of great energy!

PG: Speaking of managers, I see from Peter, that we need to wrap this up, I want to thank you guys for spending sometime talking with me tonight. Hearing a group of musicians with this much talent is rare, I look forward to what's ahead.

*For further information and upcoming shows, visit: [www.ThreeThinking.com](http://www.ThreeThinking.com) or check out the band at Ana Mandara Restaurant, Thursdays-Saturdays, 8:30-12:30 pm at 891 Beach Street in San Francisco, phone 415-771-6800.*

*Saxophonist and writer Philip Gordon can be contacted at [www.bluematrix.org](http://www.bluematrix.org) or [www.thewritingschool.com](http://www.thewritingschool.com).*

## Yoshi's Tribute to Eclectic Jazz Trailblazer Eric Dolphy

By Harry S. Pariser

incorporating a stellar lineup of local and imported musicians, Jazz in Flight presented "A Tribute to Eric Dolphy" at Yoshi's on June 24. The first set was broadcast live on KPFA.

Eric has influenced innumerable musicians, and many of those performing had particular links to the man and his music. Bassist Dr. Art Davis was the most direct link, having recorded with Eric. LA-based flautist extraordinaire James Newton was a friend of Dolphy, and has continued to develop his style. Newton served as the ensemble's leader and as the evening's master of ceremonies.

Dolphy was born in Los Angeles on June 24, 1928. He is best known for his own work, as well as his collaborations with Chico Hamilton, Charles Mingus, Booker Little, and John Coltrane. Dolphy was an accomplished multi-instrumentalist who played alto, flute, clarinet and bass clarinet. He died of a heart attack in Berlin in 1964.

Dolphy's work was always well ahead of its time. Austrian scholar Alexandra Hettergott, in a fascinating paper on Dolphy's music, commented on "Eric Dolphy's fields of musical interests: his liking for Schoenberg's free tonality, his being intrigued by Indian ragas and the singing of the Pygmies, his being inspired by bird songs..."

Beginning the first set, Newton introduced "Beard and Hat," Dolphy's tribute to Thelonious Monk, remarking that "the first time I heard Eric's music, it scared me to death." James Newton offered one of his spectacular solos, and violinist Lesa Terry - known for her playing with the Uptown String Quartet and Max Roach's Double Quartet - added to the mix.

A dynamic version of Mal Waldron's "Fire Waltz," prefaced by a spectacular intro by Dr. Anthony Brown on the drums, was followed by Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday." Chinese master musician Qi Chao-Liu sat in on zhonghu, a lower-pitched version of the stringed erhu. Qi, Lisa, and Jon Jang played with the rhythm section for this tune. As someone who experimented with many musical styles, Eric would have been pleased by this collaboration.

During the second set, the ensemble played "GW," Dolphy's tune for his former leader Gerald Wilson, "Something Sweet, Something Tender," which featured trumpeter Leo Wadada Smith, "Two-Forty-Five," and also reprised "Fire Waltz" and "Hat and Beard." San Jose State Professor Hafez Modirzadeh contributed mightily on the tenor sax, and James Newton continued his remarkable flute work. But the set's highlight was Oliver Lake's performance of "The Prophet" which featured brilliant alto sax work by Lake (best known for his work with the World Saxophone Quartet) and a great solo by Dr. Art Davis. Lake has recorded "The Prophet" on his album of the same name. The evening concluded with an encore: the Dolphy composition "Gazzelloni," presumably written as a tribute to Italian classical flautist Severino Gazzelloni. "Because," as James Newton remarked, "Charles Mingus said 'that we went to school, too.'"

*Harry S. Pariser is an artist, writer, photographer, and publisher. His latest book is *Explore the Virgin Islands*. Visit his website at [www.savethemanatee.com](http://www.savethemanatee.com).*



photos by Steve Sheraton

## Kim Nalley returns to the Bay Area this month from her new home in Europe

By Mary Destri

once described by a journalist as being "like Jessica Rabbit and Louis Armstrong at the same time," Kim Nalley's performances are brimming with sass and brass. She recently up and left the Bay area for the greener pastures (or mountains, as the case may be) of Switzerland, but will again be gracing our presence in August. I recently e-mailed Kim to get the scoop on her homecoming.

MD: What in the world are you doing in Switzerland?

KN: Learning punctuality. No seriously, I was performing in Europe last year and met the love of my life. And as much as I love San Francisco, I realized that I could always come back to a city, but relationships don't really work that way. I had some nice job offers, to perform in a show called "Swing" in Germany starting this November and to teach some workshops in Bern, so I was going to go back to Europe anyway. I just went a little sooner than expected. However, my official line is, "I'm doing the bi-continental thing right now."

MD: What do you have lined up for the Bay Area in August?

KN: I will be doing SF Jazz Festival August 1, Sonoma Jazz Festival August 13, Jazz at Pearl's with the Contemporary Jazz Orchestra August 5, a few hits in the East and South Bay and definitely jamming and catching up with musicians at my usual haunts like Pier 23, Stanford Jazz, the No Name etc. Check out [www.kimnalley.com](http://www.kimnalley.com) for details and times.

MD: Tell us about your new CD.

KN: It is entitled *Need My Sugar*, is the first CD I have produced, and like my last CD *Million Dollar Secret* is at the nexus of both jazz and blues. *Need My Sugar* is a real classic jazz vocalist with a trio album like Sarah

Vaughan's *Swinging Easy* but with more of the soul and groove associated with Dinah Washington. It features Etta James' pianist, Dave Mathews, uberbassist Jeff Chambers, and my drummer from the Nocturne Band, Kent Bryson. All three of these guys are personal friends, as well as superlative musicians and the music echoes the live trio work we have been doing. The CD was produced both in the USA and Switzerland, will hit the streets by August 1.

MD: What other projects do you have lined up the rest of this year?

KN: Besides "Swing" and teaching, I am in the process of negotiating European distribution for the CD, booking a tour in Europe that I can fly the band on the CD out for and learning the Alp Yiddish they call the Swiss

### Kim Nalley's August Bay Area Appearances

8/1, 12:00 noon SF Jazz Festival, Embarcadero 2, SF  
8/2, 10PM Downtown Restaurant, Berkeley  
8/5, 9PM Jazz at Pearl's (with the Contemporary Jazz Orchestra)  
8/9, 8PM Enrico's  
8/13, 6PM Sonoma Jazz Festival

language. Also, I am trying to meet and to work out new material with the players in Europe, which is a bit more difficult than in the Bay Area. San Francisco is unique. It has a wealth of great talent and in any given night you will have about 50 venues with live music in SF alone, not to mention the

entire Bay Area. (I am getting homesick as I write!) Over here, the scene is not so centralized. One player might be from Switzerland the other from Italy playing a gig in Germany. The European Economic Union has made this type of scenario even more common. Basel is exactly on the border of France, Germany and Switzerland, Italy is about 3 hours away and Austria is less than an hour. So, I am conveniently located for taking Central Europe by storm.

MD: What's the first thing you're going to do when you're back in San Francisco?

KN: Complain about not being able to smoke.

## Dena DeRose: Sister in Jazz

New York pianist and vocalist Dena DeRose will be performing at the San Jose Jazz Festival on August 10.

By Frank Federico

Hearing Dena DeRose singing the standards onstage today, one would never guess that she started out with no intention of becoming a singer. Yet, it took a potentially career-ending affliction to put her behind the microphone.

DeRose's musical path goes back to Binghamton, New York, where at the age of two, she began picking out tunes on a toy organ. Lessons followed by age three. "Up until I was fifteen, I was primarily [studying] classical and switching between piano and organ," she recalls. "So when I played organ, I was either playing classical or theater organ or what was called popular organ music, 'Tico Tico' and stuff like that. Then getting into my mid-teens, I got into some pop bands, wedding bands and stuff like that, so I did whatever the top tunes of the day were."

Singing, however, took second billing. "I did a tiny bit in these wedding bands," she admits. "I didn't really want to, I just had to do back up and stuff. As a keyboard player, that's part of the role in a pop band."

Eventually, DeRose found her calling. "I had dabbled in many styles before actually deciding, look, I love jazz, and I just wanna get rid of all my electric keyboards and just sit down and really learn the piano," she notes.

Watching legends like Hank Jones, Kenny Barron and Mulgrew Miller perform increased her determination. "I started practicing like crazy and did any gig I could, just to learn a bunch of tunes."



Scott Chernis

In 1988, DeRose's career took a fateful detour. "My right hand started hurting," she recalls, "and I thought, well, I'm just not practicing enough. So I would just practice like crazy and gig like crazy. Finally, it got so bad, I really couldn't play. I could hardly move my index finger, for one, without having shooting pain go straight up into my ear. I kept denying it, because I really wanted to play, and I didn't really know anything else."

It would take two surgeries – one for carpal tunnel syndrome, one for arthritis – and over three years for DeRose's piano skills to return. She put her dream of moving to New York City on hold. "That's what made me even more depressed, 'cause I was thinking to myself, 'well I was all ready to move and this happened. Is someone trying to tell me something?' It was just the worst time of my life!"

Fortunately, she found a new creative outlet. "I was hanging out, listening to

my piano teacher at a club in Binghamton, and someone said, 'come on up and sing a tune.' People applauded – I wasn't that good, but they heard something, so I started learning some tunes and...booking myself around my hometown area, just singing and having my piano teacher's trio behind me for a couple of years."

And DeRose began to study the great singers. "For learning tunes, I listened to Ella, because the songbooks, the melodies were right, and the pitch was great and you can hear every word. I bought all the [Ella] records I could, plus some Sarah [Vaughan] and Carmen McRae, and Johnny Hartman."

By '92 DeRose had relocated to the Big Apple, where she gigged with the likes of Randy Brecker and Jacky Terrasson, with no recurrence of hand problems. "When my second doctor took my cast off," she states, "he said 'your therapy is to play – and a few pinching grip exercises, that's it.' He instilled a lot of confidence in me, and I really believed it wouldn't come back, and it hasn't. In fact, when I don't practice or play enough, it gets a little stiff."

DeRose self-produced her first record, *Introducing Dena DeRose*, in 1996. It caught the ear of the folks at Sharp Nine records, who picked it up for distribution and have released two more discs. Look for a fourth, *Love's Holiday* in September. "It's again a lot of standards, plus I have two original tunes on it, one I wrote for Marian McPartland. I have special guests, one of whom is pianist Bill Charlap, who's on a [duet] cut where I just sing. Another great thing I have on [the disc] is

a brass quintet, a sort of brass choir sound that I do a number of tunes with."

When DeRose isn't touring as a leader or with "Made for the Movies: A Hollywood Songbook," singing alongside Eric Comstock and the legendary Bill Henderson, she

teaches. She's on faculties in New York City and the Netherlands, as well as giving private lessons. She's also part of the Stanford Jazz Workshop, which is going on through August 9th in Palo Alto.

And what's her most valuable advice to students? "It's no different than ever, really," she states. They need to listen to a lot of records and go see live music and listen to the people who brought this music. The past two weeks we've lost Ray Brown, Rosemary Clooney, the great songwriter Matt Dennis and a great pianist, Russ Freeman. I always tell my kids, 'whenever you see Hank Jones is playing somewhere or Sonny Rollins, you gotta go!'"

Dena DeRose will be playing at the San Jose Jazz Festival's "Sisters in Jazz" stage on Saturday, August 10 at 12:00 noon, after teaching at the Stanford Jazz Workshop through August 9.

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## jazz steps: Jazz & Poetry



# ruth weiss

## San Francisco's Jazz & Poetry Innovator

*jazz steps* recently asked raymond nat turner and zigi lowenberg of jazz and poetry ensemble Upsurge! to interview legendary Beat jazz poet ruth weiss. Having just returned from a successful European tour, the 74-year grand dame of jazz and poetry, sporting bright magenta hair, met with Raymond and Zigi to discuss the past, present and future of their unique art form. Following are excerpts from that interview.

Raymond: First, I would like to thank Mary Destri and *Jazz Steps*, for bestowing this gift and honor on us, because I had heard your name for probably the last five to ten years, come up periodically. People would say, "You should see ruth weiss," or "Do you know her?" So, now, it becomes a reality.

I wanted to say that I give you my utmost respect and props, because being a survivor in more than one way, i.e. to come out of Germany [ruth and her family fled Nazi Germany and Austria in the 1930s], and to be a survivor of the Beat poetry era, because a lot of people didn't quite make it.

ruth: Well, I hate to say it, it isn't just not making it, not being known, but a lot of people who are known are gone.

Raymond: That's what I'm talking about.

ruth: It was both. And every day, I hear about another person who's gone.

Raymond: As a person who has seen a lot – I was just totally floored by your history, a person coming out of Germany...

ruth: I don't think it's that unusual at all, but...

Raymond: Well, to me it is, because I came out of South Central LA, and I'm here in California...

ruth: OK, I think *that's* amazing!

Raymond: Well, I would grant you that. But, 150 years from now, when people open up books on the literary movement, how would you like to be known? What would you say would be the essence of ruth weiss?

ruth: I've always considered myself a poet. I've always known this is what my life was to be, way back. I wrote my first poem at five. And I have done plays, I've done paintings, I've done stories, I've done theatre pieces, but I consider myself a poet whose other work – paintings, etc. – are simply an extension of the poem. So, this is the core. So first of all, I definitely want to be known as a poet.

Then, the word "Beat," even though today it's a holy word, I still hear it in my ear how it was meant then, which was a *very* derogatory term. People would come on weekends in their polyesters and look at the *beatniks*. And then those who would not exactly put them down, but wanted to imitate, would buy beatnik kits, which I thought was very funny, with black glasses, and don't forget the bongo drums! I mean, come on!

Zigi: And the berets!

ruth: No, the berets actually started in Paris, I think. They took that, so that was taken from the Bohemians. But the beret, they took that on, too. But don't forget the black glasses, because everyone was stoned, and you don't want people to see your eyes. Completely ridiculous!

But if they say I'm part of the Beat generation, fine, because it was true. But one of the ramifications would be definitely jazz poet. But more recently, as I'm traveling around and I want to keep connecting with jazz musicians, especially Bebop, but I connected in Germany with a cellist who is into improvisation. I've connected with a flamenco guitarist, and we had fantastic shows. So, the music expands, so it isn't only jazz...and maybe it's all jazz, right?

Zigi: That's right!

ruth: So, I think it's wonderful – you're saying that you're honored to meet me, but I am so *elated* that I'm meeting some younger people that are really into that work of the word and the sound being one and intermingled, and that music is not a background to the word. That it's a dialogue. And I'm so happy that I can encourage this.

People say, "Why don't you teach classes?" Well, I like teaching by just doing it. And then, people can pick up and do their own version of it. Whenever people have come up to me and said "You've inspired me, and we've started our own group," that makes me very happy. But, always explore your own voice.

So when you say, "How would I like to be considered," I would like to be considered a poet, and I like to work with good musicians, and I also like to work with painters. I get a lot of my inspiration for what I write from visual artists. Paul Blake, who is my partner since 1967 – "the summer of love!" – is a wonderful visual artist. I really get some visual impacts. So, I get a lot of my hits from both the visual and from sound. I don't take a tune of jazz and do something. I just like the rhythm and the feel of especially Bebop jazz, which I first heard back in the 40s – Bird, you know, Charlie Parker, and Prez, and of course, Billie Holiday. She was an inspiration for me, how she dealt with her voice.

The first time I heard Bebop, I knew it was my kind of sound. I'd already been writing in those kind of phrasings.

Raymond: Where did you first hear Bebop?

ruth: In Chicago. I lived at the Art Circle in the late 40s, and there were musicians who used to jam there, and then I ended up living with a saxophone player. His name was Billie Cannon, and we were in our 20s, very young 20s, and he had just come from New York where he actually lived with Charlie Parker and his lady, Little Bird.

Then, we lived together, and what we would do was get stoned on marijuana – I never would take anything other than that – and listen for hours and hours. He really turned me on to Thelonious Monk, of course, Charlie Parker, Prez, Bud Powell, Billie Holiday.

And I became friends with a fantastic jazz violinist named Stuff Smith. He and I knew each other back in the late 40s. Of course, he

had been performing since the 30s. He lived on the South Side of Chicago, and I would go visit him. I would just sit there and smoke a joint, and he'd start playing the violin, and it was just like I was in another dimension. And, there wasn't much jazz violin. Except the Gypsies, of course. There is some Gypsy in my background, too.

*ruth weiss will be appearing at the The 1st Annual Upper Grant Avenue Fall Art Fair, to be held on Sunday, September 22, from 11 to 6 pm. The event will feature over 100 artists and merchant booths, including a small press, rare and independent book marketplace. For details on the event, or volunteering, or sponsoring, call (415) 986-6210 or (415) 781-4201.*

Anyway, I would say '49, is when I really got immersed in it, in Chicago. Then I went to New York. Then I was in New Orleans, I met several jazz musicians back in 1950. And then, I was in San Francisco in '52, and I'm walking down the street, and there is Johnny Elgin, who was a keyboard player in New Orleans. He said, "Well, I just married this lady, and she's got a place out on 18<sup>th</sup> and Church, called Hill Haven, and lots of musicians live there. Come and jam with us sometime." So, there in the boiler room, any night you'd go by, they'd be jamming there, and I would join them.

Well, a few years later, in 1956, three of those musicians opened up The Cellar, and that's how it got to be that I so-called "innovated" poetry and jazz in San Francisco."

Raymond: Why do you think that the Beat poetry thing happened in North Beach, as opposed to, say, Minnesota or New Orleans or LA? Why here?

ruth: It expanded later, by the way, into

LA, but first of all, North Beach, San Francisco has always been known as a Bohemian quarter, from way back, way back. Just like the Village in New York, just like the French Quarter in New Orleans, and so on, Chicago's Near North Side. What happened is – and this is simply my opinion – a lot of the poets, well-known Beat poets, lived in New York, and went to Columbia College, and ended up in San Francisco. So, some people say it started in New York. Well, it started with some New Yorkers, but it started actually – this is my opinion – in San Francisco, where it really exploded, it really happened. That's where the magazine *Beatitude* came out.

Raymond: Zigi read some of your poems this morning, and I could really feel the musicality. One of the things I really dug was the way you run words together. I think that's so very hip and musical to me. It reminds me of a horn. When did you start doing that, and what prompted you, and what is the meaning or significance of it to you?

### I HEAR WITH LOVE

i hear with love  
i hear with love  
i hear with love

i am the ear & voice of love  
i am the voice & ear of love  
i am the choice of love  
i hear the voice of love  
all is change

i hear the hum of the earth turning

1 2 3 4  
who are we for  
5 6 7 8  
how do I relate

fall down seven times  
get up eight

it's work it's work it's work  
it's worth it

### I HEAR WITH LOVE

Excerpted from the book *A NEW VIEW OF MATTER* by ruth weiss

ruth: I think it's my natural way of talking. My original language was not English, it was German. How did I learn English? I arrived here, I'm 10 ½ years old, my parents put me into a children's home so I wouldn't run in the streets. No one speaks German. And here I am, at the age of 10 ½, having gone through Algebra and everything, in a place where not one person speaks a word of my language, so the only way I could pick up the language was by sound. So, I was learning, at the age of 10 ½, as if I was a baby, just learning a new language, because nobody told me that this meant this. I had to figure it out, but it was like it entered me directly, instead of being translated.

And, often when I perform in Europe, and some of the people don't speak English – because all my work is performed in English – they will still respond on some kind of emotional level, because of my tone. I had that kind of experience at the Gathering Cafe, where Mary first saw me. One night, about a dozen people came in and sat in the back, way in the back. And on one of the breaks, I was near there, and I heard them all speaking French. So, I went over and started speaking English, and I realized that they didn't speak any English. So in my very bad French, I asked, "What are you getting?" They said, "Oh, it's great – and you should come to France!" Then I realized it's an international – not even international, it's an intergalactic communication of sound between people.

*UpSurge! JazzPoetry Ensemble is a free-pushing jazz band with poets Raymond Nat Turner and Zigi Lowenberg, chanting, shouting, singing, whispering, speaking and dancing their message. Combining poetry and jazz, male and female, Los Angeles and New York, Jewish and African-American, UpSurge! crosses boundaries, twists expectations, moves minds, and incites action, while always holding true to the rhythm. For more information, check out their website at [www.upsurgejazz.com](http://www.upsurgejazz.com).*





## Duke Ellington

December 1961  
Duke Ellington concert  
Sophisticated Lady - Mood Indigo  
and "A Train."  
Picasso blue  
Riding each sound  
To the end of the line  
Lightning notes shimmering  
Up and down my spine  
Like a blind man tapping  
Into raw emotion

## Poetic Jazz-tice

Poems by A.D. Winans  
Photos by Lee Tanner



## Pure Jazz

intense convoluted horn solo  
old Diz filling the room  
with his raging truth  
Miles Davis and his lyric  
savagery cutting to the bone  
slicing its way to the center  
force of gravity  
lubricating the gears  
of my mind  
whose pigments of indigo  
disguised as blue float  
through the blue haze air  
echoing latitudes of motionless  
motion

Lee Tanner's photographs have appeared in *Down Beat*, *Rolling Stone*, *Jazz Magazine* (Paris), *Jazz Times*, *American Photo* and *Popular Photography*. Tanner has had numerous one-man shows in galleries and jazz clubs across the country, including The Jazz Gallery in New York City, and Vision Gallery, Kimball's East and Yoshi's in the Bay area. For more information, visit his website at [www.jazzimage.com](http://www.jazzimage.com)

A. D. Winans is a San Francisco born poet whose work has appeared internationally. A poem of his was recently set to music and performed last April at Tully Hull at Lincoln Center in New York City, and Dustbooks recently published a new book on Los Angeles poet/novelist Charles Bukowski, entitled *The Holy Grail: Charles Bukowski & the Second Coming Revolution*.

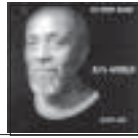


## Ghosts *in the* Night

the shrill cry of dead  
jazz greats ring out  
in the night gliding  
on dark rain clouds  
jazz notes loud as thunder  
burst the eardrums  
like artillery fire  
the 4-walls closing in  
like a police dragnet  
jazz luminaries beautiful  
butterflies spreading  
their wings  
reshaping the stars  
the universe  
cosmic matter waiting

# jazz steps: On the Town

## Club Calendar



BJ Papa hosts bi-monthly jam sessions at Cobalt Tavern in North Beach. Shown here is his CD, BJ's World.

### August 1, Thursday

3 Go T, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Anton Schwartz Quartet, Stanford Shopping Center (SFJAZZ), 6pm  
 Bata-Ketu, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Bobby Hutcherson, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Dick Fregulia/Vince Gomez Jazz Duo, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Kim Nalley, 2 Embarcadero Center (SFJAZZ), 12 noon  
 Ledisi w/Anibade, Café du Nord, 10pm  
 Los Compas, Elbo Room, 10pm  
 Mimi Fox, Downtown, 8pm  
 Sheryl Bailey, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 2, Friday

Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Bobby Hutcherson, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Jimmy Smith, Kimball's East, 8&10pm  
 Jovino Santos Neto Quinteto, Kuumbwa, 8pm  
 Ken Fishler Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Kim Nalley, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Mal Sharpe & Big Money in Jazz, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Mark Wright Sextet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Mingus Amungus, Elbo Room, 10pm  
 Raw Deluxe, Bruno's, 10pm  
 William Ford, 101 California Plaza, 12noon

### August 3, Saturday

3 Thinking, Cannery, 1pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Bobby Hutcherson, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Graham Bruce, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Jamie Davis, Enrico's, 8pm  
 Jimmy Heath Sextet, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Jimmy Smith, Kimball's East, 8&10pm  
 Mark Wright Sextet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Michael LaMacchia Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Vivendo de Pao, Elbo Room, 10pm  
 Wendel-Endsley Group, Bruno's, 10pm

### August 4, Sunday

Bobby Hutcherson, Yoshi's, 2&8pm  
 CARMA Big Band Open Rehearsal, Jazzschool, 8pm  
 Jazz Jam Session, Bird Kage, 7pm  
 Jazz Jam Session w/Khalil Shaheed, Bluesville, 7pm  
 Jimmy Smith, Kimball's East, 5&8pm  
 John Abercrombie Trio, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Paula West, Jazzschool, 4:30pm

### August 5, Monday

Bishop Norman Williams Quintet, Les Joulins, 8pm  
 Contemporary Jazz Orchestra w/Kim Nalley, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:00  
 Jenna Mammina/Andre Bush, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Larry Vuckovich, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 One for All, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 The Drummonds, Kuumbwa, 7pm

### August 6, Tuesday

Collective West Jazz Orchestra, Johnny Foley's, 9:30pm  
 Jazz Jam, Beach Chalet, 6:30pm  
 Jovino Santos Neto, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Ledisi, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Shan Kenner, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Vicki Burns, Jillian's, 7pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 7, Wednesday

BJ Papa Jam Session, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Herb Geller/Mundell Lowe Group, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Jeff Massanari Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm  
 Jules Broussard, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Ledisi, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 North Beach Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 United Brassworkers Front, Blue Room Gallery, 8pm

### August 8, Thursday

Bruce Escovitz, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm  
 Dick Fregulia/Vince Gomez Jazz Duo,

Cobalt, 7pm  
 Fito Reinoso, Elbo Room, 10pm  
 John-Carlos Perea Quartet, OACC, 8&10pm  
 John Stafford Trio, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Ledisi w/Anibade, Café du Nord, 10pm  
 Maraca, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Mimi Fox, Downtown, 8pm  
 North Beach Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 Sylvia Cuenca, 2 Embarcadero Center (SFJAZZ), 12 noon  
 Sylvia Cuenca, Stanford Shopping Center (SFJAZZ), 6pm

### August 9, Friday

B3 Sensations from Japan, Kuumbwa, 8pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Brad Niven Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Cosmosomatics, OACC, 8&10pm  
 Dave Scott Quintet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Joel Futterman/Ike Levin Trio, Noe Valley Ministry, 7:30pm  
 Kim Nalley, Enrico's, 8pm  
 Los Hombres Calientes, San Jose Jazz Festival, 7:30pm  
 Maraca, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Mel Martin, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 North Beach Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 Quetzal, San Jose Jazz Festival, 5:30pm  
 Rufus Reid & the Stanford Jazz Workshop All-stars, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm

### August 10, Saturday

Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Bluiett-Jackson-El'Zabar, OACC, 8&10pm  
 Broun Fellinis, Bruno's, 10pm  
 Dave Scott Quintet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Dick Conti Quartet, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 George Coleman Quintet, Stanford Jazz Festival, 8pm  
 Maraca, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Mitch Marcus, Cannery, 1pm  
 North Beach Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 Post Junk Trio, Enrico's, 8pm  
 San Jose Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 Susan Sutton Trio, Cobalt, 7pm

### August 11, Sunday

Ben Allison & Medicine Wheel, OACC, 7&9pm  
 CARMA Big Band Open Rehearsal, Jazzschool, 8pm  
 Jazz Jam Session, Bird Kage, 7pm  
 Jazz Jam Session w/Khalil Shaheed, Bluesville, 7pm  
 Joel Futterman/Ike Levin Trio, Musicians Union Hall, 7:30pm  
 Maraca, Yoshi's, 2&8pm  
 North Beach Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 San Jose Jazz Festival (see Festivals)  
 Summit, Bach Society, 4:30pm  
 Virginia Mayhew, Jazzschool, 4:30pm

### August 12, Monday

Bishop Norman Williams Quintet, Les Joulins, 8pm  
 Bluiett, Jackson, El' Zabar Trio, Kuumbwa, 7pm  
 Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:00  
 George Brooks' Summit, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Jackie Ryan, Plush Room, 8pm  
 Jenna Mammina/Andre Bush, Enrico's, 7pm

### August 13, Tuesday

Collective West Jazz Orchestra, Johnny Foley's, 9:30pm  
 George Brooks' Summit, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Jazz Jam, Beach Chalet, 6:30pm  
 Kim Nalley, Sonoma Jazz Festival, 6pm  
 Ned Boynton Combo, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 14, Wednesday

Dick Fregulia Jam Session, Cobalt, 7pm

Eric Shifrin, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Jeff "Tain" Watts Band, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Ledisi, Bruno's, 9pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 15, Thursday

Amendola, Hiraaharra, Sickafoose, Bruno's, 9pm  
 Brad Buethe Quartet, Stanford Shopping Center (SFJAZZ), 6pm  
 Dick Fregulia/Vince Gomez Jazz Duo, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Jeff "Tain" Watts Band, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Marty Ehrlich Quartet, OACC, 8&10pm  
 Michael Bluestein Trio, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Mimi Fox, Downtown, 8pm  
 Robert Stewart Quartet, 2 Embarcadero Center (SFJAZZ), 12 noon  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 16, Friday

Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Brenda Boykin, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Don Alberts Quintet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Hotter Thank That, Enrico's, 8pm  
 Karrin Allyson, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Ken Fishler Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Kim Waters, Kimball's East, 8&10pm  
 Lavay Smith, Café du Nord, 10pm  
 Sylvia Cuenca, Kuumbwa, 8pm  
 The Suppliants, Black Cat, 9:30pm  
 Tim Berne/Michael Formanek Duo, Ex'pression, 8&10pm

### August 17, Saturday

Bitches Brew, Bruno's, 10pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Don Alberts Quintet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Ellery Eskelin, Ex'pression, 8&10pm  
 Jackie Ryan, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Karrin Allyson, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Kim Waters, Kimball's East, 8&10pm  
 Kitty Margolis, The Napa Valley Opera House, 8pm  
 Michael LaMacchia Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Patrick Green, Cannery, 1pm  
 The Suppliants, Black Cat, 9:30pm  
 Vicki Burns, Perry's Joint, 8pm  
 Walter Savage, Enrico's, 8pm

### August 18, Sunday

CARMA Big Band Open Rehearsal, Jazzschool, 8pm  
 Jazz Jam Session, Bird Kage, 7pm  
 Jazz Jam Session w/Khalil Shaheed, Bluesville, 7pm  
 Karrin Allyson, Yoshi's, 2&8pm  
 Kim Waters, Kimball's East, 5&8pm  
 Tim Volpicella, Jazzschool, 4:30pm

### August 19, Monday

Bishop Norman Williams Quintet, Les Joulins, 8pm  
 Cathi Walkup, Plush Room, 8pm  
 Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:00  
 Eddie Gale Band, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Jeff "Tain" Watts Quintet, Kuumbwa, 7pm  
 Jenna Mammina/Andre Bush, Enrico's, 7pm

### August 20, Tuesday

Cathi Walkup, Plush Room, 8pm  
 Collective West Jazz Orchestra, Johnny Foley's, 9:30pm  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Jazz Jam, Beach Chalet, 6:30pm  
 Ned Boynton Combo, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Sonny Simmons, Bruno's, 9pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 21, Wednesday

BJ Papa Jam Session, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Sami Kaneda, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Sonny Simmons, Bruno's, 9pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 22, Thursday

Applejack Trio, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Dick Fregulia/Vince Gomez Jazz Duo, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Jules Broussard & Ned Boynton, Downtown, 8pm  
 Kepa Junkera, 2 Embarcadero Center

(SFJAZZ), 12 noon  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Noel Jewkes, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm  
 Sonny Simmons, Bruno's, 9pm

### August 23, Friday

Anton Schwartz Quartet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Brad Niven Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Lavay Smith, Café du Nord, 10pm  
 Michael Bluestein, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Sons of Bitches Brew, Kuumbwa, 8pm  
 Walter Earl, Enrico's, 8pm

### August 24, Saturday

Anton Schwartz Quartet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm  
 Bitches Brew, Bruno's, 10pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Cannon Ball, Cannery, 1pm  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Joshi Marshall, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Lavay Smith, Biscuits & Blues, 8:30&10:30pm  
 Michael LaMacchia Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Mike Vax Jazz Orchestra, Woodminster Amphitheater, 7pm  
 Post Junk Trio, Enrico's, 8pm

### August 25, Sunday

CARMA Big Band Open Rehearsal, Jazzschool, 8pm  
 Flora & Airtio, Yoshi's, 2&8pm  
 Jazz Jam Session, Bird Kage, 7pm  
 Jazz Jam Session w/Khalil Shaheed, Bluesville, 7pm

### August 26, Monday

Bishop Norman Williams Quintet, Les Joulins, 8pm  
 Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:00  
 Flora Purim & Airtio, Kuumbwa, 7&9pm  
 Barry Finnerty, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Jessica Jones Quartet, Yoshi's, 8&10pm

### August 27, Tuesday

Collective West Jazz Orchestra,

Johnny Foley's, 9:30pm  
 Jazz Jam, Beach Chalet, 6:30pm  
 John Hammond's Wicked Grin, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Ned Boynton Combo, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 28, Wednesday

Dick Fregulia Jam Session, Cobalt, 7pm  
 John Hammond's Wicked Grin, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Ledisi, Bruno's, 9pm  
 Mimi Fox, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Vince Lateano Trio, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 29, Thursday

Dave MacNab Trio, Enrico's, 7pm  
 Dick Fregulia/Vince Gomez Jazz Duo, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Mimi Fox, Downtown, 8pm  
 Oregon, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Rebecca Coupe Franks Trio, 2 Embarcadero Center (SFJAZZ), 12 noon  
 Rob Sudduth, Jazz at Pearl's, 9pm

### August 30, Friday

Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Cannonball, Bruno's, 10pm  
 Diane Schuur, Kuumbwa, 7&9pm  
 Ken Fishler Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Oregon, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Rhonda Benin & Soulful Strut, Enrico's, 8pm  
 Scott Amendola Trio, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 United Brassworkers Front, Black Cat, 9:30pm  
 Yancy Taylor Jazztet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm

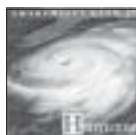
### August 31, Saturday

Anna Kristina, Enrico's, 8pm  
 Black Market Jazz Orchestra, Top of the Mark, 9pm  
 Dick Conte Trio, Cobalt, 7pm  
 Jamie Davis, Downtown, 9:30pm  
 Oregon, Yoshi's, 8&10pm  
 Will Bernard, Cannery, 1pm  
 Yancy Taylor Jazztet, Jazz at Pearl's, 9:30pm

## JAZZ CLUB GUIDE

Bach Society, Miramar Beach, Half Moon Bay, 650-726-4143  
 Beach Chalet, 1000 Great Hwy, SF, 415-386-8439  
 Bird Kage, 4822 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-655-0300  
 Biscuits & Blues, 401 Mason St., SF, 415-292-2583  
 Black Cat/Blue Bar, 501 Broadway, SF, 415-981-2233  
 Blue Room Gallery, 2331 Mission St., SF, 415-515-1210  
 Bluesville, 131 Broadway, Oakland, 510-893-6215  
 Bruno's, 2389 Mission St., SF, 415-648-7701  
 Butterfly, 1710 Misson St., SF, 415-864-5575  
 Café Claude, 7 Claude Lane at Bush, SF, 415-392-3515  
 Café du Nord, 2170 Market St., SF, 415-861-5016  
 Cannery, 2801 Leavenworth St, SF, 415-771-2061  
 Cobalt Tavern, 1707 Powell St., SF, 415-982-8123  
 Downtown, 2102 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-649-3810  
 Elbo Room, 647 Valencia St., SF, 415-552-7788  
 Enrico's, 504 Broadway, SF, 415-982-6223  
 Ex'pression Center for New Media, 6601 Shellmound St., Emeryville  
 Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia St., SF, 415-626-2787  
 Jazz at Pearl's, 256 Columbus Ave., SF, 415-291-8255  
 Jazzschool, 2087 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-845-5373  
 Jillian's, 101 4th Street, SF, 415-369-6100  
 Johnny Foley's, 243 O'Farrell St., SF, 415-954-0777  
 Kimball's East, 6005 Shellmound St., Emeryville, 510-658-2555  
 Kuumbwa Jazz Center, 320-2 Cedar St., Santa Cruz, 831-427-2227  
 Les Joulins Jazz Bistro, 44 Ellis St., SF, 415-397-5397  
 Musicians Union Hall, 116 9th St., SF, 415-575-0777  
 Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street, SF, 415-454-5238  
 19 Broadway, 19 Broadway, Fairfax, 415-459-1091  
 OACC (Oakland Asian Cultural Center) 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 388 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakland  
 Plush Room, 940 Sutter St., SF, 415-885-2800  
 Rasellas, 2801 California St., SF, 415-567-5010  
 Rasellas 2, 1534 Fillmore Street, SF, 415-346-8696  
 Top of the Mark, 999 California Street, SF, 415-392-3434  
 Woodminster Amphitheater, 3300 Joaquin Miller Rd., Oakland, 510-531-9597  
 Yoshi's, 510 Embarcadero West, Jack London Square, Oakland, 510-238-9200

**Got a gig next month? Let us know!**  
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## San Jose Jazz Fest: Free Festivities

moore continued from page 3

the festival kicks off on Wednesday, August 7 at 8:00 p.m. with a gala featuring the San Jose Jazz Orchestra, under the direction of Dennis Wilson, with singer Jamie Davis.

After that, the free festivities get underway at the headliner hub of Plaza De Cesar Chavez in Downtown SJ where the main stage is located.

On Friday, August 9, things get rolling at 5:30 pm with Quetzal, the Afro-Mex fusion band from Los Angeles. Their recent Vanguard CD, *Sing The Real* has brought the group positive attention and features the talents of folklorist-bandleader Quetzal Flores and the dynamic singer-percussionist Marta Gonzalez. 7:30, New Orleans' own Los

Hombres Calientes bring their fusion of Crescent City funk jazz with Afro-Cuban and Reggae flavors simmered into a delicious musical gumbo by percussionist Bill Summers and trumpeter Irvin Mayfield.

From there, pick your favorites and go for it! There are 10 stages of jazz, blues, Latin, world beat, high school big bands and more. Major sponsors include AT&T, Southwest Airlines, Chevron, Ford Motor Company, Forest City Commercial Management, KICU-TV, Bottomley Distributors, The Hoffman Agency, Coca-Cola and Hopkins & Carley. For the full festival line-up, check out [www.sanjosejazz.org](http://www.sanjosejazz.org) or call 408-288-7557.

Jesse "Chuy" Varela is music director at KCSM Jazz 91 and a contributor to NPR's Jazz Riffs.

### Jackie Ryan Passion Flower (OpenArt)



Clark Terry wasn't mumbling when he called Jackie Ryan "a true jazz singer" on the notes of her latest album, *Passion Flower*. Listening to the gifted Bay area vocalist embrace a diverse spectrum of internationally recognized songs and transform them into powerful interpretations that range from cabaret intimate to bebop frolic, it further substantiates Clark's continuing comment... "and a damn good one, too."

With the resident "A Team" of Larry Vuckovich (piano), Jeff Chambers (bass), Eddie Marshall (drums), Allen Smith (trumpet), Noel Jewkes (saxophone) and Luis Romero (percussion), she is a work of art seasoned with timbre, intonation and nuance. The experience as featured vocalist with the Rudy Salvini Big Band has blessed her with a strong bell like resonance that allows her smoky pitch-perfect tenor to dynamically project the emotion and melodicism she creates for the song.

She does wonders with Billie Holiday classics like "Now or Never" and "Some Other Spring," "A Bouquet For Billy," a medley of Strayhorn's "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing" and "Passion Flower," lingers with a melancholy blue hue.

The pleasant surprise is Joe Henderson's "The Kicker" with original lyrics by Ryan. Bebopping with the best of them, she digs into a groovy verse-inventing-almost-scat solo that shows the influential shades of Annie Ross and honors Joe.

She further delights us with Spanish and Portuguese renderings of "Historia De Un Amor" and "Luiza" by Antonio Carlos Jobim. Sweet and soulful, this is Ryan at her best and a must for collectors of Bay area jazz. **Jesse "Chuy" Varela**

### Jenna Mammina Meant to Be (Mamma Grace Records)



OK, I've got to admit I'm a huge Steely Dan and Tom Waits fan. So when a new CD comes out with jazz covers from these artists, I'm going to take notice.

Especially when the artist doing the covering is a local lady with talents that will most likely take her far and wide, and whose first CD, *Under the Influence*, I enjoyed very much. I speak of Jenna Mammina and her second CD for Mamma Grace Records, *Meant To Be*.

This CD also offers interestingly different versions of standards such as Duke's "In a Mellow Tone," Strayhorn's "Lotus Blossom" - beautifully enhanced with Ron Burger's evocative accordion playing - and "Honeysuckle Rose." There are also some original tunes and other standards that Jenna makes very much her own; her unique phrasing and vocal quality match the material

very well, and nothing is overdone by either the musicians or the singer. Case in point is the tenth track on the CD, "Distant Water," which is becoming a trademark tune for her on live dates. You can really never get enough of it.

The other players who blend so well include Andre Bush, guitar; James Genus, bass; Matt Rollings, piano and B3; Paul McCandless, soprano and English horn; Matt Brubeck, cello; and Darol Anger guesting on violin. Everybody's favorite bass/drum pair, John Shifflett and Jason Lewis, appear on one selection, and Tom Miller provides percussion on several tracks. All in all, this is a very listenable CD, with great production values and unique musical colorations. *Meant to Be* should find a home on many CD players throughout the country, especially with the radio play that will come as music directors become aware of Jenna's talents. **Michael Handler**

### Nnenna Freelon Tales of Wonder (Concord Jazz)



When it comes to expanding the jazz repertoire, singers have had an edge over instrumentalists. They're more likely to draw freely from musical worlds

outside jazz, bringing new material into the fold. Just check out any of Cassandra Wilson's last few releases, or Kevin Mahogany's recent foray into the Motown songbook, "Pride and Joy" (reviewed in the June issue of *Jazz Steps*).

Nnenna Freelon's *Tales of Wonder* explores the jazzy side of one of today's most jazz-oriented pop composers, Stevie Wonder. His meaty chord changes and intricate yet hummable melodies have attracted improvisers for decades. Freelon's disc recasts twelve of these gems with satisfying results.

Give Freelon credit for not taking the easy route. Rarely does she fall back on original tempos or arrangements here. By slowing the tempo on "Tears of a Clown," she draws pathos from the lyrics. (Obversely, turning "Lately" into a samba takes some of the sorrow out of the song.) She finds swinging elements in many of these tunes, notably "Another Star." Only on "My Cherie Amour" does she choose not to mess with perfection, sticking with a tempo just shy of the original.

Freelon is ideally suited for this concept album. Her voice and phrasing comes out of the jazz legacy, but is infused with the modern pop and soul influences that are inescapable for singers of a certain age. She's certainly grown up with this material. And she's gathered a capable group of musician, including guitarist Chuck Loewb and bassist Gerald Veasley, to fulfill her vision.

Though the songs of Mr. Wonder have been ably interpreted by jazz instrumentalists as well (keep an eye out for the recently-released "Standard Wonder" from saxophonist Dave Pietro), Freelon has made an irrefutable argument here for artists to reconsider these pop "standards." **Frank Federico**



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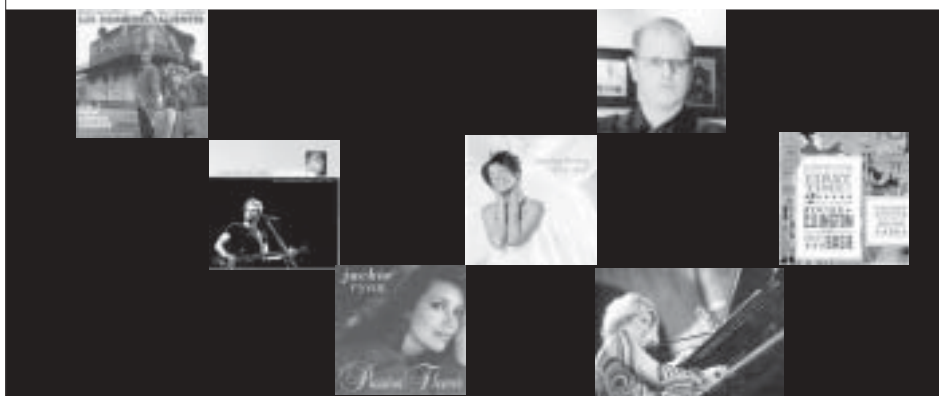
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