

OUR NEXT CONCERT

Dave Posmontier - Solo Piano



Sunday, September 21, 2014

2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Community Arts Center

414 Plush Mill Road

Wallingford, PA 19086

Directions at

<http://www.tristatejazz.org/directions-cac.html>

"Dave Posmontier may not be a Renaissance man, in that he may not be familiar with all of the arts and sciences, but there is one area of the arts in which he is all-knowing, and that is: how to play jazz music on the piano." ~ Bob Perkins, host of "BP with the GM," WRTI, Philadelphia's Jazz Radio.

Dave Posmontier has been playing piano and keyboard since age seven and has been at it professionally for the past 45 years. In 1980 he and his brother Rich formed the Posmontier Brothers Quintet and performed extensively at concerts and clubs in the Philadelphia area. They also appeared on various local radio and television shows and in 1985 produced "PBQ," an album of Dave's original music.

He became interested in traditional jazz in the 1990s and formed the Dixie Kings with trumpeter Stan Slotter. They performed as headliners for

several years at the Wayne concert series produced by Shorty Yeaworth, who was perhaps best known for directing the 1950s cult monster movie, *The Blob*. The Dixie Kings also played regularly at the Chadds Ford Winery Jazz Festival as well as other venues in the tri-state area. Dave has played with Al Harrison's Dixieland band since 1995 and has performed for Tri-State Jazz Society many times since 2005 as a member of Ed Wise's New Orleans Jazz Band.

Currently, Dave is playing, composing, arranging, teaching, and participating in educational jazz concerts, workshops and clinics in schools throughout the area. In 2010 he released "Posterity," a CD featuring original compositions and arrangements. His most recent CD, "Deep Pockets," features a live acoustic trio and is available by contacting Dave at daveposjazz@comcast.net.

You can hear a sample of Dave's playing at: www.tristatejazz.org/aud/Posmontier-Aint-Misbehavin.mp3

Concert Admissions

\$10 First-time attendees and members

\$20 General Admission

High school/college students with ID and children with paying adult admitted free

Pay at the door

In This Issue

Looking Ahead..... [Page 2](#)

Cynthia Sayer Review..... [Page 2](#)

Musician of the Month..... [Page 4](#)

Volunteers Wanted..... [Page 6](#)

Future Concert Schedules.. [Page 6](#)

LOOKING AHEAD TO OUR OCTOBER 2014 CONCERT

The Hot Club of Philadelphia - Jazz Quartet will play a Tri-State Jazz concert at the Haddonfield Methodist Church, Haddonfield, NJ on October 26th.



Barry Wahrhaftig - Lead Guitar, Vocals, Leader
Joe Arnold - Violin
Zach Fay - Rhythm Guitar
Jim Stager - Acoustic Bass

The Hot Club of Philadelphia, founded by guitarist Barry Wahrhaftig in late 2001, is an acoustic jazz quartet dedicated to playing and preserving the music of Django Reinhardt while adding their own personal touch. Barry explains that they "play gypsy jazz but [their] book includes Americana, hot jazz and other influences."

The Hot Club has shared stages with John Jorgenson, Stephan Wrembel, Robin Nolan, Howard Alden, Marty Grosz and Titi Bamberger. They hosted the Philadelphia area's first Djangofest and have played at the World Cafe Live, the Sellersville Theater, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia's first 'Diner en Blanc,' and at the Kimmel Center. Their TV credits include a feature performance on WHYY's Friday Arts.

Barry plays an AJL guitar built to the specs of the original Selmer oval-hole "Manouche" guitars made in France in the 1930s. You can learn more about the Hot Club, and hear samples of their playing, at www.hotclubphilly.com. Their latest CD, "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams," is available via PayPal at their website or you can write Barry Wahrhaftig at 403-A West Ave., Jenkintown, PA 19046. A new CD is slated for an October 2014 release.

CYNTHIA SAYER & her SPARKS FLY AUGUST CONCERT REVIEW

On Sunday, August 17, 2014, at the Haddonfield Methodist Church, Haddonfield, NJ, Tri-State Jazz presented Cynthia Sayer and her Sparks Fly Quartet in concert.



Photo by Jim McGann

The last time Cynthia Sayer performed for TSJS back in late 2010, I applied the word *enspirit*, which means "to enfuse life into, to enliven," as a description of the 2010 performance. While I remember the 2010 performance as a great concert, I would have to say "exciting" would be the word to describe the August 17, 2014 Sparks Fly performance.

Accompanying Ms. Sayer was Mike Weatherly on bass and sharing the vocals, Larry Eagle on drums and washboard, both of whom were present at the



Mike Weatherly

Photo by Paul Macatee



Larry Eagle

Photo by Jim McGann

2010 concert. Rounding out the quartet was Australian born Adrian Cunningham, whose work on clarinet proved that you can still swing on the instrument and sound totally original. In contrast, Cunningham's tenor sax had the fire, raucousness of a Ben Webster or a Coleman Hawkins.



Adrian Cunningham

Photo by Jim McGann

Then there's Sayer whose banjo did enfuse the other Sparks to Fly. Her ability to swing and command of the instrument sometimes made you forget the fact that this was a banjo swinging. Ms. Sayer, along with Weatherly and Eagle, made a great lifting rhythm, regardless of the material performed.



Cynthia Sayer

Photo by Paul Macatee

Speaking of the material performed - there was something for everybody. Not crazy about Jazz? The Sparks Fly Quartet performed Tango, Classical, Bluegrass, Western Swing, Rockabilly, Vaudeville, and even Spike Jones! All within the time frame of two-and-a-half hours.

It is difficult for me to find a performance from this concert that was less than "good." The only carry-overs from the 2010 concert were the opening number "Boogaloosa Strut" and the Eddie Peabody tribute, "Midnight In Moscow." Every number had something appealing about it, whether it was

Cunningham's piping hot clarinet on "I Love Paris" or his wailing, rousing tenor on "Yearning Just For You" or "Movin' On Over," the witty lyrics of Sayer's composition "You Talk Too Much" or the Dorothy Shea number, "Say That We're Sweethearts Again" (which makes the song "A Fine Romance" look like a happy marriage by comparison). Larry Eagle displayed his percussive creativity on the tango "El Irresistible", "Boogaloosa Strut" and "Midnight In Moscow." There was Mike Weatherly's vocals, which embraced Western Swing (the aforementioned "Yearning Just for You") and rockabilly ("Don't Be Ashamed of Your Age"). Ms. Sayer's interpretation of Louis Armstrong's "I Get Ideas" expressed the emotional side of the song's intent. And this was just part of the concert!

There were obscure compositions by Jelly Roll Morton and Hoagy Carmichael, Sayer transcribing Louis Armstrong's solo on "Once Awhile", a wildly swinging "Avalon" and "Best Things In Life Are Free", a classical banjo piece "Hungarian Dance #4, and a group participated drum solo on the finale, "Dark Eyes." If space allowed, I would elaborate on these performances as well.

Thank you, Ms. Sayer and Co. for an exciting concert.

Jim McGann

THE STRUTTER IS ON THE WEB

The current and back issues of The Strutter are on the Tri-State Jazz Society Web. The Strutter archives cover over three years of back issues and all the bands and soloists who performed during that period are listed there.

Read the current issue at www.tristatejazz.org/Strutter.pdf.

Jazz Musician of the Month Hilton Jefferson

He had admirers. Barney Bigard and Johnny Hodges named him as one of their favorites. Ben Webster cited him as the "prettiest" of the altos. In a poll conducted by Stanley Dance, Buster Bailey, Russell Procope, Cozy Cole, Jimmy Crawford and Milt Hinton they rate him as the most underrated jazz musician. Even a modern jazz player by the name of Dizzy Gillespie held praise for the man, and even hired him for his big band in the 1950s. Yet his solo output on record is limited to a handful of recordings. Who was this individual so admired in the jazz community? Alto saxophonist Hilton Jefferson.

Born in Danbury, Connecticut on July 30, 1903 and educated in Boston (junior high school), and Providence, Rhode Island (high school), Jefferson's first instrument was the banjo with which he began his professional career in the city of brotherly love, Philadelphia, PA, with the Julian Arthur Orchestra in the summer of 1925. Whether there was a need for an alto player or a desire to switch instruments, Jefferson left the band to study alto sax, and returned to the Arthur band as alto saxophonist. The band moved to New York at the beginning of 1926.

New York City in the 1920s was jam-packed with bands, and competition for musical talent was fierce. Outside territorial bands entering Manhattan's borders for hopes of a big break usually folded, unable to provide salaries the competition provided. A perfect example of this is when King Oliver brought his Creole Jazz Band into the Big Apple in May, 1927. By autumn of that year, Oliver had disbanded.

Jefferson, after leaving the Arthur band, worked five months with a performer ironically named "Banjo Bernie." From May, 1926 until 1928, Jefferson began the first of many extended visits with the Claude Hopkins orchestra. Hopkins himself called the band at this time "a helluva band." Trombonist Sandy Williams agreed:

"Claude Hopkins...made me an offer to go to the Belmont Café in Atlantic City for the summer of 1927. I went, in his seven-piece band. Everything we played, we played very soft. It was a terrific band. Hilton Jefferson was on alto, Elmer

Williams on tenor, Bernard Addison on banjo, Bob Brown on drums and Doc Clark, from Philadelphia, on trumpet."

It was with another leader where Jefferson would make his recording debut - Chick Webb. Like with Hopkins, Jefferson would return for periodic stays with the band. In a never-sleep town like New York City, Jefferson made the most of opportunities during the late 1920s. According to John Chilton in his book, *Who's Who In Jazz*, "worked for brief spells with many bands in New York including: Edgar Dowell, Bill Brown, Ginger Young, Charlie Skeete and Elmer Snowden."

In late 1929, King Oliver reassembled a touring band, and Jefferson was part of the entourage. It was the last great band of the New Orleans cornetist, and with support from Jefferson, pianist Hank Duncan, and a fellow New Orleanian by the name of Henry "Red" Allen, added life to titles "Stingeree Blues," "Mule Face Blues" and "Shake It and Break It."

The 1930s found Jefferson in one of three orchestras - Webb (1930-1931, 1938-1940), Hopkins (1934-1935), and Fletcher Henderson (1932-1934, 1936-1938). For the most part, Jefferson's role was as section leader - a role unappreciated except by fellow musicians - making the sax section sound like one. Musicians like Jefferson, Hymie Schertzer with Goodman's band, Earle Warren with Basie et al may not be household names because of little or no solo opportunities, but they knew how to make a sax section sing. Willie Smith, lead alto with Jimmie Lunceford's band, lamented the loss of section leading on new generations of musicians. "A lot of the new guys can't really play their horns. It would be impossible to use them in a section. If you asked them to play the melody - nice, pleasant sounding - they would be completely lost. No tone. No technique." Jefferson also, according to one source, embellished written arrangements. Alyn Shipton, in his biography of Dizzy Gillespie, states that Jefferson's "additions to the scores were so perfect [Cab] Calloway complained when his replacement Rudy Powell left them out."

When the opportunity presented itself, as far as solos were concerned, Jefferson made the most of his time. He can be heard with Hopkins on "As Long As The World Goes 'Round and 'Round." With

Henderson, he is the alto sax soloist on "Wrappin' It Up," "Rug Cutter's Swing" and "Can You Take It?"

Jefferson remained with Chick Webb until the leader's passing and vocalist Ella Fitzgerald took over leading the band. In 1940, Jefferson joined Cab Calloway, and almost immediately was given a solo feature, one that is most identified with Jefferson - "Willow Weep For Me." He would remain with Calloway until 1948.

With Bebop on the rise after the Second World War, and a second AFM recording ban in 1948, work for big bands dwindled, and musicians like Jefferson were affected economically. Even though he would continue to be active musically in the 1950s and early 1960s, Jefferson took to non-musical employment as a New York bank guard.

Jefferson did have one final moment of glory. In 1957, seventeen musicians from the original Fletcher Henderson orchestra, led by Rex Stewart, performed at a jazz festival on Long Island. The success of the performance inspired The Big Reunion album. Jefferson participated in the endeavor, and, in addition to Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Stewart, J.C Higginbotham, Dicky Wells, Al Casey and others, had significant opportunities to solo on "Honeysuckle Rose," "Wrappin' It Up," "Casey Stew," "Three Thieves" and most telling on Thelonius Monk's "Round About Midnight."

As difficult as it is finding a Jefferson solo on record, equally difficult is finding any information about the man himself. Garvin Bushell, who performed in the sax section with Jefferson in the Chick Webb band, described the altoist as a loner.

"He was a peculiar-acting person," Bushell recalled, "-intelligent, though, and a fine artist. I think he was a troubled sort of man. His mind was never clear. You could feel that there was always something that worried him, something that kept him from doing much talking."

Milt Hinton, bassist in Cab Calloway's orchestra, had a somewhat different view of Jefferson.

"I first got to know Jeff when he joined Cab's band in 1940, and over the years he became one of my dearest friends. He was a musicians' musician, known and respected by other players

but practically unknown to the public. He was too shy to push his own career, but there's no question he had the ability."

Jefferson faded from the music scene in the mid 1960's, and passed away after a long illness on November 14th, 1968.

Jim McGann

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December, 2014 No concerts planned due to the holidays.

January 18, 2015 The Al Harrison Dixieland Band, Wallingford, PA.

February 15, 2015 Jerry Rife's Rhythm Kings, Haddonfield, NJ.

March 15, 2015 Stephanie Trick-Solo Pianist, Wallingford, PA.

Wallingford: Concerts are held at the Community Arts Center, 414 Plush Mill Rd; just west of exit 3 of I-495 ("The Blue Route").

Haddonfield: Concerts are held at the Haddonfield United Methodist Church, 29 Warwick Rd., just south of Kings Highway; about a ten minute walk from the PATCO station.

Detailed directions at www.tristatejazz.org.

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- Distribute FLIERS and post them on bulletin boards in your neighborhood.
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October 12, 2:00-5:00 p.m. Mike Davis and His New Wonders Jazz Band

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