

## FROM THE CHAIR

Here I sit, inside on a rainy day at the end of June, trying to focus on writing my column. Instead, I hear "Singin' In The Rain," "A Foggy Day In London Town," etc. A strange experience for those of us in the Bay Area. We'd never consider that a picnic or an outdoor gig might be affected in June due to weather—unless it was too hot. This year so far things seem to be different.

Do not let unpredictable weather prospects deter you from all that is going on in the local jazz scene. Indoors, we have the 40<sup>th</sup> year of the stupendous offerings by the Stanford Jazz Workshop. Such a variety of the well-known and lesser-known. PAJA is a partial sponsor of two events: Bird With Strings, featuring Andrew Speight on Saturday, July 16, and Joe Lovano and Friends on Monday, August 1. We'll have a notice in the program about PAJA and will be acknowledged by Jimmy Nadel for our support.

Outdoors, there are Stanford Shopping Center events on Thursday evenings, Town & Country Shopping Center on Wednesdays, Jazz on the Plazz in Los Gatos on Wednesday evenings, Jazz on Main in Redwood City Monday nights, plus the San Jose Jazz Festival in August. Details on all these series are provided later in this issue. Lots of wonderful music to hear performed *live* by big names and littler names. We must be especially open to the lesser names and newcomers; they deserve an audience and encouragement just as much as the more established artists.

Speaking of audiences, I am increasingly focused on the need to grow our audiences. It is one thing for loyal PAJA members to attend our events (such as the recent Jeff Hamilton Trio gig at the Palo Alto Elks Club), but we old timers do not need to be persuaded to go; it is more a matter of timing that may keep us from attending. So how can we increase our turnouts, how can we get more new people to experience this unique American cultural world called JAZZ? Over the years, we have supported the development and training of young performers, but unless there is a sufficient audience for the music, well, they won't get to show their stuff. Further, if we can't draw more fans, it affects our efforts to produce future concerts. We all need to think of ways that we might better educate and attract new people to what we know is

so special.

Let me conclude by inviting you to our upcoming FREE member party to be held on Sunday, August 21, 3-5pm, at the Community School of Music and Arts in Mountain View. Due to the renovation of the Palo Alto Art Center, we had to hunt for a new site and CSMA has graciously made their patio available to us for this event. Not only are we providing a nice musical bonus for our members, but we're also building a bridge with CSMA that is long overdue. Herb has lined up some cool music with Bob Adams and friends, so come and join us next month. (More details later in this issue.)

Looking forward to seeing you at the member party. Do talk with any and all Board members about your views on PAJA and what we can do to *grow the audience*.

In appreciation of your continued support,

C. Stuart Brewster  
Chair

## FREE MEMBER PARTY—AUGUST 21

As Stuart said, PAJA is putting on another of its free member parties, this time on Sunday afternoon, 3 to 5pm, August 21, at the Community School for Music and Arts (CSMA), the Finn Center, at 230 San Antonio Circle, in Mountain View. CSMA is located near the intersection of San Antonio Road and California Ave.

Dr. Herb Wong has engaged a real swinging group, in Herb's words, to entertain us for the afternoon, a quartet led by B3 organist Bob Adams. The ensemble will also have Joe Oliveira on tenor sax, Tim Volpicella on guitar, and Jason Lewis on drums.

There will be snacks and wine and other beverages available and all PAJA members are invited to drop by, meet the PAJA board, take a look at this beautiful school of music and arts, socialize with other members and musicians, have a glass of wine, and enjoy the general vibe. Did we mention it's all free? Please come and groove to the Bob Adams Coretet.

## HERB WONG'S FALL COURSE

Dr. Herb Wong has been conducting courses in jazz for the Palo Alto Adult School for about a quarter century. There is always a new theme to each course and the next one this fall is entitled: Trumpet Kings, Part I—featuring Roy Eldridge. Herb plays and comments on a wide variety of music and styles and there's usually a special guest or two to add special spice to the classes. Herb's vast knowledge of jazz and the music he selects makes for a fascinating immersion into the subject at hand. The course runs on Tuesday nights for seven weeks, starting September 28, finishing November 9. The fee is \$120 and the classes are held at Palo Alto High School, Room P10 (portable classroom).

## THE HAMILTON TRIO RULES

What a memorable concert offered by the Jeff Hamilton Trio. Sunday afternoon, June 5<sup>th</sup>, was the date, at the new Palo Alto Elks lodge on El Camino Real. Bruce Powell put on one of his jazz parties for PAJA and booked this incredible ensemble for the enjoyment of local jazz fans. It was a blast.

They played a number of tunes from their highly-rated 2009 album "Symbiosis," including the title track and a beautiful "Polka Dots and Moonbeams," plus a number of new songs from an album they are currently working on. This was mainstream jazz at its very best and the 200 fans who showed up were treated to an unforgettable afternoon of brilliant arrangements and skillful performing by Hamilton on drums, pianist Tamir Hendelman and bassist Christoph Luty. "Virtuoso" is an overused term, but these three can each certainly claim that title—they're as good as it gets.

KCSM's Michael Burman, who attended the concert, wrote to thank Bruce Powell and offered these comments: "This was the third or fourth time I've seen them perform, and my view is that the only piano trios that could rival them for tightness and arrangements would be (a) that of Oscar Peterson with Ray Brown and Herb Ellis, (b) just about any of Ray Brown's own trios (with, e.g., Gene Harris or Benny Green), or (c) the "Triple Threat" trio which Ray Brown co-led with Monty Alexander and Herb Ellis. And since none of those trios is in operation



Katoko Sax, Claire and Harvey Mittler, at Trader Vic's after the Hamilton Trio concert. *Jan De Carli photo.*

any longer, Jeff's stands alone. (I don't mean to slight Bill Charlap's trio with Peter Washington and Kenny Washington, which I also never miss a chance to see: they're marvelous, too, but in a different way, fewer originals and less arrangement.)" Burman later said that "Jeff's trio has the ghost of Ray Brown all over it—and that can't be bad."

The trio later adjourned with several PAJA board members and others to the adjacent Trader Vic's for dinner. Tamir told us about some of his interaction with the media, intimating that few know the right questions to ask. Case in point: one reporter had been after him for an interview for several days, and he finally told her he had about 20 minutes before a concert and they made arrangements to meet. She showed up about 10 or 15 minutes late and her first question to him was "What do you play?"

## THANKS FOR THE CONTRIBUTION

"At some point in my career as a New York City trumpet player, [pianist] Al Haig called me to do a gig with him for some very strange affair and reminded me of a previous relationship between us. Al had been in jail for killing his wife, a charge from which he was later exonerated. During his incarceration, there was a notice in *Down Beat* magazine indicating that money was needed for his defense. I sent a contribution. During the above gig, he became overly effusive about my contribution and I said, 'Al, it was only five dollars.' Al replied, 'Yeah, but you're the only one who sent anything!'" Letter from Don Stratton in *The NOTE*, Fall 2010.



## HOMAGE TO ELLA

While traveling in Virginia, longtime PAJA Board member Shirley Douglas ran across a large plaque in the town of Newport News dedicated to “Ella Fitzgerald/The First Lady of Song/1917-1996.” The plaque states that Ella was born in Newport News on April 25, 1917, and later moved to New York where her singing talent was “discovered at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem.” It called her the most popular singer in the world for more than half a century. In Ella’s memory the City of Newport News renamed 24<sup>th</sup> Street “Ella Fitzgerald Way” on October 11, 2008. And the city’s Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center theater also bears her name.

## JAZZ IN OUR AREA

Board chair Stuart Brewster in his column talks about how lucky we jazz fans on the Peninsula are to have such a cornucopia of music to select from this summer, all within easy driving distance.

First and foremost is the **Stanford Jazz Festival**. We’re told there are still plenty of tickets available for most shows. This is the historic 40<sup>th</sup> edition of the Festival—36 events extending to Saturday, August 6 with the George Cables/Madeline Eastman concert. As mentioned, PAJA is a proud partial sponsor of two of the shows: Bird with Strings, featuring Andrew Speight, on July 16, and Joe Lovano on August 1.

The **San Jose Jazz Festival**, the weekend of August 12-14, has one its best lineups in quite a while. Check [www.sanjosejazz.org](http://www.sanjosejazz.org) and you’ll see headliners listed for the festival, such as Ramsey Lewis, Arturo Sandoval, Dena DeRose, Wayne Wallace, Giacomo Gates (with Larry Dunlap), local vibraphonist Christian Tamburr, and vocalist Sophie Milman.

**Stanford Shopping Center** has a summer music series currently ongoing on Thursday evenings, 6-7:30pm. Clifford Brown, Jr. hosts. There isn’t much mainstream jazz left on the schedule, but on July 7 Michael Zilber leads

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