

FROM THE CHAIR

What a “cool” summer we’ve had this year. The temperature stayed low but the local jazz scene was hot. Not the year to go to Chicago or the East Coast looking for jazz where the weather was unbearably hot, hot for weeks. No need to leave town. We had plenty of really hot stuff here and it was cool.

The Stanford Jazz Workshop, in its 39th year, once again provided a magnificent collection of concerts. I went to four and saw many of you also enjoying the great variety of sounds produced by a great variety of jazz artists. As I have said over and over again, nothing beats LIVE performances. I also went to the San Jose Festival, which is another great showcase for talented musicians. Kudos to Jimmy Nadel for the Stanford Festival and to Geoff Roach for San Jose. We are so fortunate to have these individuals who devote themselves to organizing these events.

My last column brought up my concern over why don’t more PAJA members attend our concerts. A couple of you pointed out that, for some, all they can do to help support jazz is to maintain a membership and we should not be distressed if they only get to an occasional concert. The critical thing is that PAJA is not just about attending concerts. Rather it is a vehicle where one can help keep jazz happening with live concerts that are locally accessible at reasonable prices and thereby provide grants to further support jazz.

What a pleasure it was to hand an honorary PAJA membership card to Taylor Eigsti. My jazz literacy education

and association with PAJA started about the time Taylor went with a group of members to a meeting of the now-defunct International Association for Jazz Education held at Disneyland. Seeing the 12-year-old Taylor talking and exchanging with another Taylor—Billy Taylor—sticks in the memory. It’s been a real delight to watch how this young man has grown and taken his place among the jazz elite.

Sam Pearl has resigned from the Board. Thanks, Sam, for your contribution and service.

Please check out the PAJA web site from time to time for interesting tidbits, reviews, upcoming gigs. If you’d like to provide commentary, news, reviews or whatever to the site, contact Ed Fox at ef@trackandfieldnews.com. We need more content contributions to www.pajazzalliance.org.

Hope to see you at our free member party this Sunday (Sept. 12) at the Palo Alto Art Center, and/or at our big fall concert at Mountain View HS on October 1.

G. Stuart Brewster
PAJA chair

DON’T MISS PAJA’S BIG FALL CONCERT

OCTOBER 1 is the date—Friday evening at Mountain View High School’s handsome Spartan Theatre. DIRECTIONS: Foothill Expressway to Fremont Ave. exit in Los Altos, pass Grant Rd., left on Truman. Or Rte. 85 toward Cupertino, take the Fremont Ave. exit, turn right onto W. Fremont Ave, right on Truman. The high school is on the right at 3535 Truman Ave. Plenty of parking available.



In July, the PAJA board voted to award an honorary membership to Taylor Eigsti; we caught up with Taylor at the Stanford Jazz Festival and PAJA chair Stuart Brewster was able to hand over a membership card to our first honorary member. *Nancy Fox photo.*

So, what's happening? Actually, we're reprising the great Ella Fitzgerald tribute that the Stanford Jazz Festival put on in July and Herb Wong has titled the concert, "Remembering Ella Fitzgerald, America's First Lady of Song." That original concert was so entertaining and successful (packed house at Dinkelspiel) that it occurred to some of us that it was a shame that this was a one-time-only deal. This is the kind of fabulous show that would go a long way toward promoting jazz if it could be repeated again and again, or even travel to other sections of the country. Very accessible music with the great standards sung by Ella over the years and executed by a cast of top-rank musicians and vocalists.

So, PAJA will do its part—and those of you who missed this marvelous concert will now have a chance to catch it. And anyone who did attend the first concert should be happy to experience it again; actually, this concert will be much more than a reprise—the program has been much revised and expanded.

Dr. Herb Wong wanted to assemble as much of the original cast as possible, and working directly with pianist Larry Dunlap, who put the original show together, he's been able to confirm the participation of four of the anchors of the first Ella tribute: **Larry Dunlap** on piano, **Kenny Washington** on vocals, **Noel Jewkes** on tenor, and **Seward McCain** on bass. That core group will be joined by Bay Area standout **Bobbe Norris** on vocals; **Mike Omos**, trumpet, and **Jason Lewis** on drums. Young singers Holly Smolik and Laila Smith, who also participated at Stanford, will be on hand at this one too.

This heavyweight group will be performing many of Ella's classics such as "Lady Be Good," "How High the Moon," and so on. Was there anything from the American Songbook that she *didn't* sing? The concert is a tribute to former Jazz Buff editor Tony Harry, and The Music School of Sunnyvale is co-sponsoring the event. Jazz organist Brian Ho (who teaches at The Music School) and his quartet will open the concert with a few numbers.



Kenny Washington



Bobbe Norris & Larry Dunlap

Tickets are \$25 to the general public, \$20 for PAJA members, \$5 students and may be ordered by mail from Ed Fox, c/o PAJA Tix, 294 Tennessee Lane, Palo Alto, CA 94306, or may be purchased at Peninsula Music & Repair in Palo Alto; the Record Man in Redwood City; Vinyl Solution in San Mateo; or Groove Yard in Oakland. We should also have tickets available at the free member party on September 12 at the Palo Alto Art Center.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE STANFORD JAZZ WORKSHOP

For the past 39 summers, the Mid-Peninsula community has enjoyed the wonderful concerts presented by the Stanford Jazz Workshop. Many of us, however, have only been generally aware of the Jazz Camp educational program for young students, age 12-17. This aspect of SJW provides a fun, focused and supportive weeklong environment where young musicians study and play with motivated peers and a prestigious faculty of professional musicians and educators. Over the years, the Palo Alto Jazz Alliance has provided substantial grants to be used as scholarships for deserving students attending the program.

On July 21, various PAJA board members and other friends of jazz were invited by Jimmy Nadel, SJW Director, to a behind-the-scenes tour of the Jazz Camp. We were treated to a two-hour tour of actual teaching situations and illuminating commentary by SJW Development Director Maggie Andrews.

Most of the visitor group was on hand for the free noon jam in front of Tressider Union—some terrific licks from SJW faculty, such as Dayna Stephens (tenor), Erik Jekabson (trumpet), Joe Gilman (piano), Lynn Gruenewald (alto/flute), and others. At 1pm, Maggie greeted us on the steps of Dinkelspiel. She explained that this week there were 215 middle and high school campers on hand, to be followed by another similar-sized group the second week. The campers would all really be put through their paces with classes from 9 to 5, with options for one-on-one teaching in the early evenings. This creates a whirlwind of activity with up to 80 classes being conducted each day by a faculty of some of the best jazz musicians on the planet—some of whom, such as Taylor Eigsti, were once students themselves at the Jazz Camp.

We visited classrooms led by Andrew Speight, Lynn Gruenewald, Wayne Wallace, Peter Stoltzman, Kristen Strom, and Joe Gilman. There was a lot of faculty cross-cooperation. For example, Gruenewald's class had Gerald Clayton's bassist Joe Sanders actively involved in the teaching. At the Gilman/Speight class, trumpet ace Erik Jekabson helped out. And that morning pianist Gerald Clayton talked to the assembled campers in a special session.

Each student is provided with an individual instruction plan befitting his/her skill level and is assigned to a combo that practices a tune during the week and then presents it in front of the whole camp on Friday night. We observed one of these groups getting the kinks out in the Speight/Gilman class. The students come from all over, including many from foreign lands.

We got a glimpse of the nuts and bolts details, watching techies (essentially stagehands) move between rooms and building making possible the necessary physical setup for each classroom.

The dedication and commitment by all, be they teachers or students, staff or volunteers, was heart-warming. These youngsters were here to enhance their skills for their passion—JAZZ. And the faculty was doing what it loves—helping develop better players for the future of jazz. Clearly a highly labor-intensive operation that requires a lot of organizational skill and time to make it all work.

A hearty thank-you to Jimmy and Maggie for allowing us to gain a better appreciation for SJW and its annual miracle.

(Prepared by Ed Fox and Stuart Brewster)

ZOOT—AKA THE ENERGIZER BUNNY?

“We showed up down there [Eugene Smith’s Jazz Loft in NYC] in the afternoon, and, man, there were about 30 saxophone players. Everybody wanted to get a piece of Zoot [Sims], you know. So . . . we played six or seven hours, and the cats would be playing. Finally, we were exhausted; we went out. . . to the bar, had a few more drinks, then went to bed. And we went back over a day or two later. We walked into the studio, and, man, there were saxophone players crashed out all over the [bleeping] place! They were wiped out, you know. And there’s Zoot. He’s behind a set of drums. He’s playing bass drum and a hi-hat and he’s got his horn. There’s nothing but bodies all around him, and he’s still going. . . You want a piece of Zoot? Lots of luck, man.” Phil Woods, quoted in *The Jazz Loft Project*, by Sam Stephenson.

DR. HERB WONG’S FALL CLASS STILL OPEN

Herb’s course this fall is titled, “JAZZ ALTO SAX ICON PHIL WOODS—Part 2”. It’s a new course and will be given one time only. The program extends over seven weeks, September

14-October 26, Tuesday evenings, 7-9:30pm. For more information call the Palo Alto Adult School at 650/329-3752. Though classes start very soon, Herb says there’s always room for one more. So, if you want to learn more about one of the all-time jazz greats, and hear a good sampling of his best performances, sign up now.

SPECIAL OFFER FROM SFJAZZ

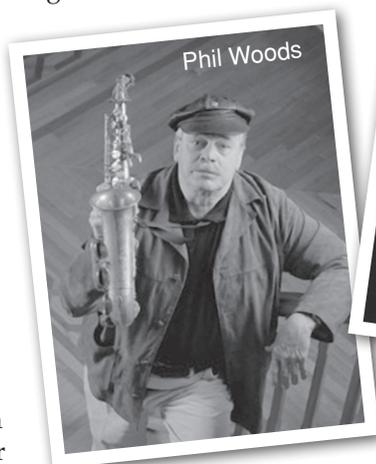
SFJAZZ is extending an offer to PAJA members in regard to two of their upcoming concerts, both on October 10—Danilo Perez, solo piano (Monk’s birthday tribute) at Herbst Theater in San Francisco (3pm), and Esperanza Spalding at Davies Symphony Hall (8pm). Both concerts are just steps away from each other.

PAJA members are invited to these concerts, which are otherwise open only to SFJAZZ members. No ticket fees. Perez tix are \$25 and \$50 (premium); Spalding \$20/\$30/\$45/\$60. Spalding is playing her bass and singing with her new group, which combines a classic string trio with a rhythm section. Sounds great.

To purchase tickets, call the SFJAZZ box office at 415/788-7353 and mention you are a PAJA member. Offer not available online. For more information on the concerts: www.sfjazz.org/concerts/2010/fall/artists/spalding.php or see the PAJA web site.

PAJA PEOPLE

PAJA board member and peerless jazz fan **Bruce Powell** had major cardiac surgery in July and is on the road to recovery. Evidence of recovery is that Bruce was able to attend the recent Jeff Hamilton Trio gig at the San Jose Jazz Festival . As a sponsor of the event, this was one group Bruce refused to miss! Here’s a pic of Bruce with the Trio: Christoph Luty, bass, Tamir Hendelman, piano, and Jeff Hamilton, drums.



Bruce Powell (he's the one without a tie)
/Jan De Carli photo

