

PRESCOTT, AZ

'Jazz Activities'

The Prescott jazz scene continues to show potential. Through the spring-summer season there was an ample amount of live-jazz flowing from the Hassayampa Inn around the corner and down the Cortez Street corridor, enough to satisfy the informed jazz person. In addition to the venues within the jazz zone, a couple of modern jazz performances took place at the Indian/Mediterranean restaurant on N. Montezuma St. As usual, the Courthouse Square mixed a little jazz into its eclectic summer music program. Then there was the annual Jazz Summit Festival weekend that brought together a mix of visiting and local musicians to perform in a variety of community settings.

A season highpoint came by way of inter-acting with the college students that returned home to perform regularly on the Hassayampa Inn patio. The Adam's brothers Nicky (piano) and Patrick (trumpet) along with drummer Alex Morris were eagerly received every Friday eve. and Sunday afternoon. These student musicians who readily mixed into the Prescott Jazz Society showcase activities were really enlightening to talk to and perform with. Patrick Adams was invited to expand the Cannonfire Quartet into a Quintet during the Juneteenth Festival and on one of the rare occasions that the Prescott Jazz Society presented on the Courthouse Square in addition to a full (3) hour gig at the Raven Cafe. These homegrown (PHS) musicians are being finely tuned at Oberlin College by professional musician/teachers such as the great trumpeter Marcus Belgrave and drummer Billy 'jabali' Hart, another major major performer. However, I was sad to see the young drummer Alex off to some far-away land to earn a living but it would have been even sadder to have him remain in Prescott where he would probably have wasted all of the talent that he has developed under Billy Hart.

But the dream and efforts of the Prescott Jazz Society remains vital and vibrant enough that we all may reach a point in time when these young musicians will begin coming home and staying long enough to help raise the consciousness of this southwest community. Keep the faith!

CHICAGO, IL

"A September to Remember"

My recent return to the city of Chicago where I performed with great musicians and visited w/family was rewarding and inspiring. The city is building everywhere making it very difficult to recognize familiar areas and easy to get turned around if not lost. The joints were jumping and Chicago jazz has definitely overcome the 'blues hype' that tended to overshadow the fact that Chicago is and has always been a great place for jazz musicians and fans alike. The blues is still happening but the jazz scene is

bubbling! Free festivals beginning with the Taste of Chicago, the Grant Park Jazz Festival, the Toyota after-festival Festival (nightly from 8:00 pm - 2:00 am), the World African Arts Festival, the Southshore Country Club Festival, the relatively new and free (4th annual) Hyde Park Jazz Festival (sponsored by the University of Chicago) which featured such Chicago jazz giants as Jodie Christian, Willie Pickens, drummer Robert Shy and 137 other musicians for over (40) non-stop shows. There was some kind of live jazz from 9:00 am until 2:00 am. The festival venues were spread out to the churches on the campus, the DuSable museum and parks (55th - 59th St), and the Hyde Park Bank but there were shuttles to transport the people. As I was preparing for my own gig, I missed the 15 piece Data Band with a brother that sounded like Ray Charles and one of the original 'Raeletts' w/two other girls that I'm told "was an incredible act". Then there was the inter-racial Latino Band with the amazing Japanese trombonist. However, the final jam-session act presented (4) trumpets and (5) saxophonists for (5) drummers and they were all 'smoking hot'!

With the exception of the labor-day weekend Grant Park Festival, this all happened during my brief less than 2-week stay. This was actually the first time out of the many times that I have returned to Chicago that I felt homesickness.

But anyway, I am pleased to be back and up to my usual challenges. My pre-set meeting of October 4th with Mayor Kuykendall and Tourism Director, Don Prince went well and left me with a sliver of hope for their future support of a Jazz District. The Director of Tourism did, however, make reference to his possible approval of a proposed Springfest that I also submitted as a pre draft-idea. This will soon be followed up as a genuinely documented RFP.