



Our Twenty-eighth Season

Our One Hundred Seventy-Ninth Program
2006-2007

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FROM NEW ORLEANS:
THE NICHOLAS PAYTON QUARTET

Sponsored by the Department of Music and the
New Hampshire Library of Traditional Jazz

8 p.m. Monday, November 13, 2006
Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, Durham, NH

THE ARTISTS

The Nicholas Payton Quartet

When Nicholas Payton walked onto this stage last December 14 a chain of images and reflections was generated in many of us which brought into focus some of the touching but mysterious relationships which make the jazz community so special. The occasion was Clark Terry's 85th birthday celebration, and in a sense Nicholas was duplicating a role played fifteen years earlier by Adolphus "Doc" Cheatham: a surprise appearance by one of Clark's trumpet-playing friends. Would any of us have imagined in 1990 that in a few years young Nicholas (b. 1973) would have found common aesthetic ground with venerable Doc (b. 1905) and joined him in a series of performances culminating in an acclaimed CD completed shortly before the latter's death at age 92?

The history of jazz has often been oversimplified in terms of both geographical origins and influential performers, but the pre-eminence of New Orleans is not in doubt, nor is the significance of that early sequence of its trumpeters of which Nicholas Payton (and a few other natives such as Wynton Marsalis and Terence Blanchard) are direct legatees, a birthright mandating devotion to both the nurturing power of tradition and the creative use of imagination. Even the most incurably nostalgic among us knows there were giant steps from the mythical Buddy Bolden to the classic King Oliver and the spectacular Louis Armstrong.

There must be some unusual currents in the air in New Orleans, since Nicholas began on the trumpet at age four (subsequently describing himself as a "late bloomer"); moreover, a few years hence he introduced Wynton Marsalis to his blossoming development by playing to him over the phone when a call came in to his bassist dad! He has been a zealous listener who has absorbed the entire history of his instrument, from the pioneers through Dizzy Gillespie, Clifford Brown and beyond, and this level of curiosity, sophistication, and integrity has made him one of the most comprehensive young artists in today's wide world of jazz styles.

Nicholas is joined this evening by a trio typifying the range of jazz activity one can find in another coastal city some distance from New Orleans. The mix in the north Atlantic may be a bit different from that of the Gulf of Mexico, but its richness and variety are exceeded nowhere else on the planet; numerous artists of all ages, points of origin, and experiential tastes gather, intermingle, and inspire one another. Mike Moreno hails from Houston, Sylvia from California, and Essiet from Omaha via Oregon, but they all are deeply immersed in the excitement and breadth of possibility which New York provides, even in the face of a commercial pop culture that has reduced musical entertainment to a crude "least common denominator" which is so often antithetical to the elegance of jazz's dialects. As we warmly welcome Mike and Essiet for the first time, we extend a special collective hug to Sylvia who has visited UNH several times with the Clark Terry Quintet.

Katrina was of course an immediate issue last December (as sadly it remains today) and we were particularly grateful that Nicholas was able to be here, since as a New Orleans native and resident he had much else to deal with; likewise it is a measure of his character that he has not allowed recovery from an accident to interfere with this evening's engagement.

Doc Cheatham's demeanor as he played his instrument has been described as "heraldic". The dictionary defines a herald as "a person viewed as a sign that something is about to happen". Nicholas Payton has been touched first hand by this image. As he continues to translate it with conviction and eloquence into his own expressive language, be ready.



TRADITIONAL
Jazz
SERIES

NICHOLAS PAYTON, TRUMPET

MIKE MORENO, GUITAR

ESSIET OKON ESSIET, BASS

SYLVIA CUENCA, DRUMS

*Tape recorders and cameras are not permitted due to contractual arrangements.
Please turn off beepers and watch alarms. Your cooperation is requested.*

THE SERIES

The UNH Traditional Jazz Series began in 1979 through the imaginative vision and generous commitment of the late Dorothy C. Prescott. It promotes the enjoyment and understanding of the art through concerts featuring musicians of regional, national, and international prominence. The program represents a unique endeavor to expand interest and honor outstanding talent and achievement.

Musicians wishing to do so are encouraged to offer their recordings for sale or mail order during intermission; a brief announcement may be made. The sponsors have no financial interest in such sales beyond offering a courtesy service to the artists and the public.

Program Notes -- Paul Verrette

Production -- David Seiler

2006-2007 SCHEDULE

- September 18:** There's Still More! The New Black Eagle Jazz Band
♦
- October 16:** The Amazing Mays, Plus Two: The Bill Mays Trio
♦
- November 13:** What it Means to be from New Orleans: The Nicholas Payton Quartet
♦
- January 29:** Fourth Annual Tommy Gallant Scholarship Concert:
Two Bass Hit; A Tribute to Ray Brown: The Marshall Wood/Dorita Byrne Ensemble
♦
- February 26:** How Tasty the Nutmeg: The Galvanized Jazz Band
♦
- April 2:** Asian Outreach: Dave Pietro's New York/Tokyo Connection

OTHER SPECIAL JAZZ PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

- October 27:** *Family Weekend Concert, UNH JAZZ BAND and COMBOS, Dave Seiler and Thomas Palance, directing. Strafford Room, Memorial Union Building, UNH.*
♦
- January 16:** *Harry Jones Memorial Concert with the Seacoast Big Band, Dave Seiler, directing with special guest, composer and saxophonist Mike Tomaro. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH.*
♦
- March 11:** *Gala Jazz Concert, DR. CLARK TERRY, trumpet and flugelhorn, with guest artist, world-renown drummer/composer/arranger Dennis Mackrel and the UNH JAZZ BAND, Dave Seiler, director, Thomas Palance, guest director. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH.*

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For tickets call (603)862-2290