HOWARD ALDEN  
guitar  

KEN PEPLOWSKI  
clarinet  

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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC  
AND THE NEW HAMPSHIRE  
LIBRARY OF TRADITIONAL JAZZ  

8 PM MONDAY  
MAY 8, 1995  
STRAFFORD ROOM  
MEMORIAL UNION BUILDING
THE ARTISTS

HOWARD ALDEN AND KEN PEPLOWSKI

Our series has been noted for instigating fresh and unusual combinations of instruments and personalities; at first glance one might put tonight's configuration in the same category, but alas we cannot claim credit for the idea, Howard and Ken already having made a highly-praised CD in the Concord Duo Series. Nevertheless, this is a unique pairing with no obvious precedent — maybe a once-in-a-lifetime event, if a bit of hyperbole can be permitted!

For one thing, duos of any type are a rarity, especially if a whole program is to be sustained. Usually the piano is involved because of its particular resources and long history as a self-contained solo instrument; the guitar is at once more intimate, personal, and challenging to the individual performer's imagination and variety of techniques. In one sense the guitar is a salutary exemplar of multiple personality syndrome, ranging across stylistic and historical boundaries from folk to classical to flamenco to blues to jazz to rock to other categories perhaps beyond description, in each case the actual acoustic or electronic sound being altered in a way quite unlike the piano. Most practitioners of the instrument restrict themselves to a single category; only the few artists of Howard Alden's comprehensive command and catholic curiosity provide us with the best of several worlds.

Traditionalists think of the clarinet as being fundamental to jazz and swing, but we may sometimes forget (and the young among us may never have learned) that for reasons difficult to comprehend the clarinet fell out of favor with younger performers around mid-century; perhaps its classically-conditioned demands were considered unhip during that period of jazz ferment, but at any rate it is a blessing to have a Ken Peplowski around to help save us from the barrenness of another lost generation. New York Times critic John S. Wilson described Ken as having "a Benny Goodman tone and a Buddy DeFranco style," not a bad point of departure.

Howard and Ken operate together and separately in a variety of imaginative professional contexts, (Ken flies here direct from Europe), always with openness, toward both the old and the new, and a sense of the integrity and renewability of traditional idioms; their perspective should be a model for those considering entrance into the field. The distinguished Whitney Balliett of The New Yorker stated it in compelling fashion when he spoke of a handful of young jazz musicians who "contain the past and the present. They hold in balance the love of melody and tonal quality of the old swing musicians and an awareness of the harmonic expansions and rhythmic freedom that have taken place in the past twenty years."

Welcome back, guys, and believe us, it won't be for the last time!
As this season comes to an end we wish to thank you, our audience, for your patience with the logistical problems created this year as UNH improves its physical plant. Likewise, we are grateful for the extra assistance and cooperation we have received from so many people both on and off campus. And finally we ask you to keep listening, and perhaps reading and reflecting about the healthy things that have developed in the tradition — not always without pain — since this series began a decade and a half ago, and to which it has made a contribution we hope its founder would consider prideful.
TRADITIONAL JAZZ SERIES
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OUR ONE HUNDREDTH AND FIFTH PROGRAM

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GUITAR

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