

TRADITIONAL  
**Jazz**  
SERIES

*Beginning our Third Decade!*

Our One Hundred Thirty-Seventh Program  
1999-2000

**F**abulous  
Fiddle  
Fest



Three Generations

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

8 p.m. Monday, February 28, 2000, Johnson Theatre  
Paul Creative Arts Center, Durham, NH

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## THE ARTISTS

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### Claude Williams, Lesa Terry, and Billy Contreras

When Fiddler Williams first visited us in 1998 we noted on this page that although the violin is generally not thought of as a mainstream jazz instrument, it has in truth been present on the scene since the creation, if in limited numbers, and rumors as to its unsuitability are highly inaccurate. In fact, the instrument's articulative and pitch-related flexibility is eminently adaptable to jazz expression, but perhaps on one hand the violin's identification with the symphonic/chamber tradition, and on the other the "fiddle's" centrality in various folkways, have tended to generate other dominant but incomplete images. Nonetheless, tonight we dispel them in force, with three performers representing highly different backgrounds and ranges of experience revealing the essence of the jazz tradition and the possibilities of individual personality.

Claude Williams, who celebrated his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday just last week, has been a working professional for 76 years, first in his native Oklahoma, then in Kansas City, the geographical base for his travels since 1928. Known first as a guitarist, (he also played mandolin, and incidental bass), in 1936 he was part of Count Basie's pre-New York rhythm section with Walter Page and Jo Jones, actually taking occasional solos on violin (would that they had been recorded!). For the next few decades he worked in the Midwest, eventually teaming up with Jay MeShann, (Charlie Parker's old mentor!) on a recording in 1972 that began to bring him wider recognition which has been mounting ever since, including a performance at the White House just after his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. A few weeks later Boston Globe critic Bob Blumenthal wrote that "he played with the spirit of a recent college grad"; better look out, kids!

Lesla Terry, classically trained and a former member of both the Atlanta and Nashville Symphony Orchestras, is known particularly for her innovative educational efforts in reference to jazz, blues, and spirituals, She has taught at Spelman College and lectured at New York University, is a member of the Uptown String Quartet which played on the UNH Celebrity Series in 1996, and was featured on this very stage at the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration for family member Clark Terry. Lesla appeared with Claude in the Broadway revue *Black and Blue*, and takes on another Broadway assignment tomorrow (!)

Billy Contreras at the age 15 has already touched most – perhaps all – of the violin bases. He comes here directly from the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival at the University of Idaho, where as in 1998 and 1999, he was a guest soloist with Lionel's big band in the closing concert. Other jazz luminaries with whom he has played include Al Grey, Hank Jones, and Herb Ellis.



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**Claude Williams ~ Lesa Terry  
~ Billy Contreras, violins**

**assisted by:**

**Paul Verrette, piano ~ David Newsam, guitar  
John Hunter, bass ~ Les Harris, Jr., drums**

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In a slightly different realm he won the Old Time National Junior Fiddle Championship in 1996, has appeared at the Grand Ole Opry, and worked with famous Nashville studio and session player Buddy Spicher; Mark O'Connor wrote the notes for Billy's first CD. Moreover, he studies classical violin and has been soloist with the Nashville Symphony and presents in-school workshops. As a beloved recently departed friend would say, "Good grief!"

Tonight's rhythm section is composed of faces, etc. which however familiar have not appeared previously on this series as a unit. They are all listed in the UNH Directory as "Temporary Instructional Personnel"; make of that what you will, but paraphrasing Bill Clinton one might say that it depends on what "temporary" means. Sic transit gloria.

A program crossing generational, racial, and gender lines admirably and joyfully realizes some of the goals of the series, and besides, this is New Hampshire during an election year. Although not particularly a fan of jazz violin, our revered founder, Dorothy Prescott, would crack many an approving smile, in between pithy and pungent political comments.

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

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## THE SERIES

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The UNH Traditional Jazz Series began in 1979. 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**

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### 1999-2000 SCHEDULE

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- September 13:** The Real Herb Pomeroy Quintet, featuring John La Porta  
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**October 25:** "The Men They Will Become"; Eli Newberger, Jimmy Mazzy, & Butch Thompson  
♦  
**November 22:** The Prodigious Kenny Werner  
♦  
**January 24:** A Tribute to Red Norvo; Ed Saindon, Howard Alden, & Steve Novosel  
♦  
**February 28:** Fabulous Fiddle Fest: Three Generations; Claude Williams, Billy Contreras, & Lesa Terry  
♦  
**April 10:** "Do Nothing 'Til You Hear From Us"; Buddy DeFranco, Dave McKenna, & Joe Cohn  
♦  
**May 1:** Benny Powell and Jane Jarvis

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### OTHER SPECIAL JAZZ PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

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- October 2:** *Family Weekend Concert, Seacoast Big Band, Dave Seiler, directing. This night of swing music includes dancing and refreshments. Granite State Room, Memorial Union Building.*  
♦  
**January 18:** *Harry Jones Memorial Education Fund Concert, Seacoast Big Band, Dave Seiler, directing, with special, surprise guest artist! Proceeds to assist senior high school students who will major in music. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, PCAC.*  
♦  
**March 12:** *Gala Jazz Concert, Dr. Clark Terry, trumpet and flugel horn; Bud Shank, alto sax artist; with Mark Elf, guitar; Chris Neville, piano: UNH Jazz Band, Colin Mason, directing. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH.*

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For tickets call (603)862-2290