Our Twenty-fourth Season

Our One Hundred Fifty-third Program
2002-2003

The Quintessence:
Donna, Bucky, & Scott

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

8 p.m. Monday, September 23, 2002
Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, Durham, NH
THE ARTISTS

Donna Byrne Quartet, Bucky Pizzarelli & Scott Hamilton

For many of us, even those close to the action, it is hard to believe that we are entering the 24th year of this series; sadly, its founder, the late Dorothy Prescott of Auburn, NH, lived to hear fewer than half of the 152 concerts to date. A person of strong and pungently expressed convictions, Dot was enthusiastic, though not uncritically so in most cases, and otherwise tolerant of those of us in whom she placed her trust. As the years have passed she would have welcomed (though not uncritically so!) the repertory movement, the Ken Burns epic, and the growth of scholarship both respectable and respectful. In fulfilling her mandate we have attempted to honor the renewability of the central tradition itself, and beyond this the manner in which it is used as an audible and salutary point of departure for fresh approaches.

Tonight’s ensemble would have warmed Dot’s heart and satisfied her mind completely and unequivocally. Indeed, Donna Byrne was one of her favorite singers (and people), and the juxtaposition of her core combo with the individual talents and experiential ranges of Bucky and Scott is the type of vital jazz encounter which Dot felt to be at the essence of the art.

Donna’s handling of the multiple challenges of vocal quality and coloration, personal textual communication, and rhythmic vitality is exemplary. Four years ago we described her on this page as (among other things) a class act; subsequent events—including several CDs—magnify this judgment.

Bucky Pizzarelli (known to some segments of the population as John’s father) is nearing completion of six decades of professional activity, starting at age 17 with Vaughan Monroe (some in the audience will have danced to same!), including a long association with Benny Goodman, countless recordings with countless artists across the jazz spectrum, major studio and concert work, and programs at the White House. He is as complete an artist on his instrument as can be found, and his joyful inventiveness is ageless.

In the early 1970s while still in his teens Scott Hamilton startled the immediate post-Coltrane saxophone world by taking his inspiration from the earlier generation of Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, and Lester Young, finding therein a variety and richness the implications of which had hardly been exhausted—a view perhaps containing prophetic overtones (no pun!). Scott’s unique sense of the lyric and expressive properties of his instrument is now heralded internationally.

Paul Schmeling, Marshall Wood, and Jim Gwin are examples of just why jazz fans in Boston should consider themselves blessed. Paul is also head of the piano department at Berklee. And Marshall serves as Donna’s musical director, and husband, for all of which he receives just one check.

Perhaps our spirits are healthier than a year ago when Hank Jones lifted them so powerfully, but the times do remain uncertain. As we ponder the mysteries of human diversity and divisiveness, we can be thankful for our equally mysterious capacity to both create and respond to jazz, a very special musical phenomenon because of the nature of its multiracial roots in a period when our nation was arguably more flawed than today, and also because of its opportunity for each artist to speak personally and imaginatively in his/her own voice. It may not save the world from disaster, but it can give us more reason to try. And tonight we are in good hands; thank you again, Donna—and Dot.
Traditional Jazz Series

Donna Byrne, vocalist

Paul Schmeling, piano
Marshall Wood, bass
Jim Guin, drums

with

Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar

&

Scott Hamilton, tenor sax

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

2002-2003 SCHEDULE

September 23: The Quintessence: Donna, Bucky, & Scott
October 21: The Rarest of Pairs: Toots Thielemans & Kenny Werner
November 25: Family Values: The Brothers Heath
February 3: Remembering Vic: Phil Wilson & Company
March 3: Pellucid Piano: Bill Charlap
April 21: Forever Fresh: The Back Bay Ramblers

OTHER SPECIAL JAZZ PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

October 19: Family Weekend Concert, UNH JAZZ BAND and COMBOS, Dave Seiler, directing: UNH JAZZ SINGERS, William Kempster, directing. Granite State Room, Memorial Union Building, UNH.

January 21: Harry Jones Memorial Concert: Seacoast Big Band featuring composer/saxophonist BOB MINTZER; Dave Seiler, directing. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH.

February 28: Dave Seiler Quintet: David Seiler, clarinet; David Newsam, guitar; John Hunter, bass; Ed Saindon, vibes; Les Harris Jr., drums. "A Tribute to Benny Goodman, Charlie Christian and Others". Johnson Theatre, PCAC.

March 24: Gala Jazz Concert, DR. CLARK TERRY, trumpet and flugelhorn with a distinguished guest and the UNH JAZZ BAND, Dave Seiler, directing. Johnson Theatre, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH.

For tickets call (603)862-2290