THE MAINSTREAM

WARREN VACHÉ ............ Cornet
SCOTT HAMILTON ......... Tenor Sax
JACK BUMER ............... Piano
JACK LESBERG ............ String Bass
CHUCK RIGGS ............. Drums

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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC,
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LIBRARY OF TRADITIONAL JAZZ

8 P.M. MONDAY
FEBRUARY 27, 1984
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE ARTISTS

SCOTT HAMILTON, WARREN VACHE, JACK LESBERG, JACK BUMER, and CHUCK RIGGS

One of the most engaging — and amazing — aspects of jazz, when one stops to think about it, is that its total development has taken place within the possible span of a single human life. The various roots flourished over many earlier decades, but their coalescence into the unique musical language that came to be identified as jazz took place just about the time that Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington were born at the advent of our century. In the relatively short period since then, jazz has achieved recognition as a substantive form of classical art as well as a simply joyous means of popular entertainment. This happened so quickly that it has been sometimes difficult to correctly assess the intrinsic merit of each new stylistic trend, its capacity to constructively interact with others, and the precise location of the mainstream.

When young performers of a new generation really take the trouble to face tradition, their fresh and unprejudiced views often surprise both contemporaries and immediate predecessors. Scott Hamilton and Warren Vaché have shown this independence of thought, and we are as a result most grateful, and optimistic about the future of the idiom; Jack Lesberg made an equally significant choice as a young professional years before Scott and Warren were born, and for that jazz listeners have been thankful for a very long time.

Scott Hamilton, not yet 30, grew up in Providence, Rhode Island, investigated piano, drums, and clarinet, then discovered the tenor saxophone at the ripe old age of 17. Having been blessed with rich listening experiences very early in life, he had unusual perspective at that age, and with remarkable ease he found kinship with the generation of Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Ben Webster, and Flip Phillips. (It is ironic that critics have spoken of these influences on him virtually in one breath, while the literature is full of discussions of the profound differences among them, an interesting comment on how the mainstream emerges!) Partly through contacts with Roy Eldridge and Benny Goodman he soon appeared on the national scene, and was featured on twenty recordings in just five years.

Warren Vaché, only slightly Scott's elder, also benefited from a helpful family background, his father being a bass player, and he developed through a more formal route, graduating from Montclair State University in New Jersey. Thus he acquired a most flexible and extended technique which he applies to traditional approaches with resulting individuality. Among his accomplishments is his performance at Carnegie Hall as a member of the reconstituted Wolverine Orchestra in a program of the music of Bix Beiderbecke.

Jack Lesberg was born in Boston in 1920 and studied violin and viola as well as bass, developing a rare legitimate grounding in his chosen instrument. In the late '40's this led him to divide his attention between professional symphonic and jazz playing at the highest levels in New York. However, traditional jazz won out, a somewhat unusual situation when a performer has actually proven himself in the more established classical world. Yet not many musicians have played with both Armstrong and Bernstein, and from Australia to Iceland: Jack has covered a lot of territory. Because of this very special background his technique has a focus that is often lacking in performers whose concept of sound has never been free of the less natural properties generated by electronic means.

Jack Bumer has graced our stage on a number of occasions, most recently in December with Gray Sargent and Marshall Wood, and Chuck Riggs, another young native of Providence, will be remembered from his appearance last fall with Dick Wellstood and Kenny Davern; it is a pleasure to welcome them back.

As we listen to these five artists we might reflect on John Wilson's words in the New York Times; they were written about Warren, but certainly apply to the whole group: "(He) has broken through the Dixieland curtain toward an identity of his own that builds from his traditional jazz roots and reaches out into a broad middle area of jazz that is as searchingly contemporary as it is rooted in tradition."
In keeping with the spontaneity of jazz, the performers will announce their own selections from the traditional and swing repertoires.
THE SERIES

The UNH Traditional Jazz Series, now in its fourth year, promotes the enjoyment and understanding of the art through concerts including musicians of regional, national, and international prominence. The program is based on the fundamental convictions that there are no age barriers in the performance and appreciation of this idiom, and that its joyousness and creativity are ever-renewable. Our combined sponsorship unites students, faculty, and continually devoted enthusiasts in a unique endeavor to expand interest, and honor outstanding talent and achievement.

Many of the artists presented in our series are available only on private recordings not readily found in stores. For the benefit of the public, 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.

Cameras and tape recorders are not permitted. Your cooperation is requested. Films or recordings by the sponsors are for the benefit of students, who may inquire about their availability at the Dimond Library.

Program Notes — Paul Verrette
Production — Dave Seiler

COMING EVENTS

April 2  Dave Whitney Quintet