THE BUTCH THOMPSON–JIMMY MAZZY QUARTET

BUTCH THOMPSON—PIANO
JIMMY MAZZY—BANJO & VOCALS
MARSHALL WOOD—STRING BASS
STUART GROVER—DRUMS

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

8 PM MONDAY
OCTOBER 13, 1986
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE ARTISTS

THE BUTCH THOMPSON—JIMMY MAZZY QUARTET

Practitioners of the art of traditional jazz have several ways of communicating with their roots, or perhaps it is more accurate to state that the roots generate separate branches which reveal quite differentiated views, depending on one's choice of perspective. Before becoming further tangled in roots, branches, or whatever else, let us simply note that the first two events in this year's series present highly contrasting examples, equally vital, of the living nature of the traditional jazz organism.

Despite the emphasis on spontaneity of improvised solos and immediacy of impulse, the White Heat Swing Orchestra must start from the written or otherwise organized arrangement, and the ensemble's success depends as much on its realization of someone else's vision as on the individual creative accomplishments of its aggregation of gifted members. On the other hand, Butch Thompson and Jimmy Mazzy will get their sparks tonight largely from confronting one another, the strength of their unique personalities as each approaches the music fundamentally shaping the character of the interactive result.

We heard Jimmy in a somewhat similar context exactly 52 weeks ago, with another major talent, Eli Newberger. Since then much has happened; for one thing, Butch came to New England, most especially to UNH, and shortly thereafter Jimmy was invited to join him on "A Prairie Home Companion". It is thus without question fitting and proper that their nationally broadcast merger of artistry be shared more intimately with us.

Butch Thompson is one of the very few active jazz musicians in the country whose name has become a so-called household word, probably in numerous households where it is not understood that what he is playing is really jazz! Butch might be embarrassed to be described as a cult figure, but he is in fact pretty close to such. In a curious way his audience exposure through radio is comparable to Benny Goodman's in the 30s. Butch is immersed in the rag and stride tradition stemming from Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, and Fats Waller, as his performance here in February so eloquently demonstrated, and there are indications that his less well-known capacity on the clarinet will emerge tonight. (Another coincidence—he has recorded on that instrument with Chicago Rhythm, who played here in May.)

Jimmy Mazzy's appearances in our series go back to its very first year, and have involved several different formats. The expressive power and intensity of his singing are matched by his imaginative selection of unusual and neglected material—much of which he has recorded—and underlying it all is his remarkable command of the banjo, an instrument not always identified with the more sensitive and graceful aspects of the art. (Of this writer he has made a believer!)
Marshall Wood is also familiar in face, figure, and most notably, sound, to our audiences. Though not yet thirty, he ranges over the entire spectrum of jazz dialects, recently appearing in New York with Anita O'Day and Chris Connor. He will perform here again with Gray Sargent in March.

It is always a pleasure to introduce someone new to our stage, especially a New Englander. Stuart Grover (we apologize for the misspelling in our brochure) is active mainly in the Boston area, his credits including Wild Bill Davison, Sabby Lewis, and Frankie Newton.

Tonight we celebrate once more the special freshness and warmth that can result when creative people reach out to each other, to an audience, and to a living tradition. Welcome again Butch and Jimmy, and friends.

Tape recorders and cameras are not permitted due to contractual arrangements. Your cooperation is requested.
THE SERIES

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

THE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Performance Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>White Heat Swing Orchestra: A Tribute to Benny Goodman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Butch Thompson—Jimmy Mazzy Quartet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>South Frisco Jazz Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Art Hodes, Solo Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Paul Verrette &amp; Tommy Gallant: Two Pianos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Gray Sargent Trio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>Paramount Jazz Band</td>
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</tbody>
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