

T R A D I T I O N A L
Jazz
S E R I E S

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

OUR FORTY-EIGHTH PROGRAM

**TOMMY GALLANT
AND
PAUL VERRETTE
TWO PIANOS**

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

**8 PM MONDAY
FEBRUARY 9, 1987
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

THE ARTISTS

TOMMY GALLANT and PAUL VERRETTE

(NOTE: Although prudent judgment, or humility—an even rarer quality among musicians—, might rule otherwise, the regular filler-upper of this page will do so once again despite his temporary change of role tonight, and will be so bold as to shift to the grammatical first person when appropriate.)

Piano players don't usually perform together in public; the reasons for this are mostly practical and are self-evident enough not to need recounting here. Nonetheless, the savory possibilities of such activity, if not quite in a class with partaking of the forbidden fruit, are alluringly tempting to those not yet exorcised of devilry. Appetites have perhaps been whetted by a few recent recordings (Count Basie/Oscar Peterson, Jay McShann/Ralph Sutton), occasional television (Billy Taylor), or more regular radio (Marian McPartland). And certainly the most exciting live effort in the memory of some of us was the concert in this series by Mike Markaverich and Jack Bumer in 1981.

Tom and I have been friends for 30 years and have talked of doing something like this for at least 20% of that time span. We are both New Hampshire natives (a first for the series—now you know why we were invited!), and fate has us currently teaching in the towns in which we grew up. Having begun our individual explorations of jazz just a few years apart in that atmosphere of ferment that characterized the late 1940s, we have reached our present states of musical being (however one would choose to describe them) by quite different routes, Tom's more practical, mine more formal, and converging in a manner more intuitive than studied, more subjective than objective.

I guess we are both sort of mainstream eclectics, speaking much the same dialect but with different accents and inflections. Since each of us works frequently alone, a self-indulgent luxury reserved almost exclusively to pianists, our instincts sometimes lead us spontaneously in independent directions; in cinematic terms, the adventure or this falls somewhere between *The Perils of Pauline* and *The Pink Panther*. However, we find that the satisfaction we get when the plot unravels more or less successfully comes not from "making two pianos sound as one" (a somewhat reductive accomplishment no matter how skillful), but rather from having two pianos sound quite different together than either would alone, simply because the practitioners are reacting to each other's insights, whims, predilections, and peculiarities, all on the spur of the moment. We play conversational jazz, sharing opinions, arguing, and (usually) achieving some final if tentative agreement about the issues at hand (no pun intended).

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Our musical topics are fairly conservative, but even seemingly familiar territory has riches to yield when mined together afresh; —some Gershwin, Kern, Ellington, a touch or two of blues, a bit of gospel, a couple of things usually associated with so-called Dixieland, maybe a Latin tune, —and, reflecting our dance-band days, a waltz medley(!). We like material where we can get involved with the harmonic possibilities as well as the melodic and rhythmical elements, a proclivity not without its risks. And occasionally we tend to project different moods into the pieces than were originally intended.

Above all, though we know that jazz can justifiably take on dimensions both esoteric and profound, we subscribe to a point of view succinctly enunciated by Count Basie's autobiographical collaborator Albert Murray, who has noted that in the final reckoning the Count really believed that "jazz is about having a good time". We hope you agree—and do.

***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

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| September 15 | White Heat Swing Orchestra:
A Tribute to Benny Goodman |
| October 13 | Butch Thompson—Jimmy Mazzy Quartet |
| November 17 | South Frisco Jazz Band |
| December 8 | Art Hodes, Solo Piano |
| February 9 | Paul Verrette & Tommy Gallant: Two Pianos |
| March 9 | Gray Sargent Trio |
| April 13 | Paramount Jazz Band |