TRADITIONAL JAZZ SERIES

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OUR FIFTY-SECOND PROGRAM

MIKE MARKAVERICH
SOLO PIANO

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

8 PM MONDAY
OCTOBER 19, 1987
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE ARTIST

MIKE MARKAVERICH

From the cocktail lounge to the concert stage solo pianists are a special breed because they operate in the single central medium where the solitary artist does it all; maybe this accomplishment is why the pianists who enhanced the atmosphere of the old New Orleans brothels were given the fanciful, if irrelevant, appellation of “professor”! Alone, each must project the fundamental elements of melody, harmony, and rhythm, as well as the details of texture, touch and nuance.

Despite this complexity - or perhaps because of it - strong personal characteristics emerge; in both classical and jazz traditions the experienced, if uneducated, listener can recognize the difference between Artur Rubenstein and Vladimir Horowitz, or Teddy Wilson and Fats Waller, or Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson, even if a technical description would seem to indicate more similarities than differences.

Yet, given the problem of juggling all these factors in an improvisatory framework, it is not surprising that so few jazz players take up the lonely challenge, most preferring the company of a rhythm section or portion thereof. However, our series audiences have been blessed over the years with a remarkable array from this select group, and the youngest of them returns tonight to remind us that the future is very literally in good hands.

Mike Markaverich is a new Hampshire native. Blind since shortly after his birth in Nashua in 1949, his piano interests were first kindled at the Perkins Institute when he was very young, and really took fire while he was an undergraduate at Darmouth and heard some Oscar Peterson recordings. He switched his major from French to Music, and later studied at Rivier College and Berklee before enrolling as a graduate student at UNH. In 1978 he received his Master of Arts degree, following a program that concentrated in music history and theory.

For the last several years Mike has been a resident of Hyannis, Mass., where he performs regularly at the Tara Hyannis and the Asa Bearse House. Just one year ago he placed third in the Great American Jazz Piano Competition at the Jacksonville, Florida, Jazz Festival, where George Wein was one of the judges. He has a recording, “In Piano Land”, on Mark-time records, with a second disc due very soon, and his stunning two-piano collaboration with Jack Bumer on this series in 1981 has been issued on the TJ label. Mike performed solo here in 1983.
This writer has some vivid memories of certain of Mike's activities from his graduate student days, most specifically a spontaneous non-stop blues accompaniment to an equally extemporaneous 20-minute classroom presentation by the great singer Joe Williams (who confided after the fact that the only time he had done something similar was with Count Basie at Carnegie Hall), and a performance of a Beethoven piano sonata in a student recital which provoked a standing ovation and exhibited that same energy and individuality that marks his jazz playing. Mike truly does it all, and his “all” is permeated by that curiosity of intellect and richness of soul that caused him to explore the wonders of music so broadly.

Mike joins the sponsors of this series in dedicating this program to the memory of that pianist and spirit nonpareil who graced this hall several times, and helped establish the standards to which all aspire, Dick Wellstood.

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

September 14  Dave Whitney Quintet
October 19    Mike Markaverich: Solo Piano
November 16   Bob Wilber Quintet
December 7    Paradise City Jazz Band
February 8    Jay McShann & Ralph Sutton: Two Pianos
March 7       Jimmy Mazzy & Friends Explore the Banjo
April 11      Red Rose Ragtime Band