SUMMIT REUNION

BOB WILBER
AND
KENNY DAVERN

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

8 PM MONDAY
OCTOBER 5, 1992
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION BUILDING
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
SUMMIT REUNION: BOB WILBER & KENNY DAVERN

Sometime we will review the previous 80 essays that have appeared on this page of our Traditional Jazz Series programs and decide how much we have overused the term "unique", but no matter the ultimate result, we unabashedly apply it to tonight's program, with little fear of contradiction. One is not apt to encounter elsewhere on our planet two soprano saxophones in shared and unobstructed endeavor; pairs of most other instruments turn up quite regularly, but it may well be that the standard set by Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern in their series of Soprano Summit recordings a decade and a half ago was so high as to intimidate pretenders to the pinnacle.

Younger listeners may well identify the soprano with a different expressive world than that represented by our guests; the post-Coltrane approach to the instrument tends not to suggest the links with the clarinet, its authentic jazz birthright, and a medium in which Bob and Kenny also possess mastery. But whatever one's taste or presupposition, all sonic pathways lead back to the legendary Sidney Bechet (1897-1959), and the fact that Bob in his late teens was able to study with that giant lends particular authority to tonight's proceedings.

Both of our protagonists are indigenous New Yorkers touched early in their lives by the magic of the New Orleans idiom, and soon blessed with inspirational first-hand contacts with some of its older exemplars; Bob worked with Bechet and Jack Teagarden, Kenny (a pro at 16) with the latter, Phil Napoleon of Memphis Five fame, and Henry "Red" Allen. As diverse jazz dialects came into vogue, and sometimes passed, Kenny and Bob maintained the vitality of the central tradition; both worked with Eddie Condon (whom we honor in our final concert this season), Kenny was featured with the Dukes of Dixieland, and Bob was a founding member of the World's Greatest Jazz Band. Also, video buffs can still experience Bob's 1986 Grammy-winning score to Cotton Club, and we must not forget that he gave us the Benny Goodman 50th Anniversary Carnegie Hall Concert!

The success of Bob's and Kenny's efforts to propagate the renewability of the language is evident when one notes that tonight's supporting cast is totally from a younger generation. Howard, Marshall, and Les are all familiar personages to our audiences, and one can pray they will become musical role models to our students, given the fearsome nature of many of the alternatives in our culture.

Following Soprano Summit's first recording in the mid-70's, New York Times critic John S. Wilson wrote "Anyone in a position to book jazz groups who does not grab Wilber and Davern is out of his/her mind." We weren't in business at the time, though we did engage them separately a bit later. However, sanity returns, and so do they, together. Rejoice!
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BOB WILBER -- Soprano sax, clarinet
KENNY DAVERN -- Soprano sax, clarinet
HOWARD ALDEN -- Guitar
MARSHALL WOOD -- String bass
LES HARRIS JR. -- Drums

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

October 5  Summit Reunion: Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern
November 2  Mike Markaverich
November 30 Harold Ashby
February 1  Paradise City Jazz Band
March 8  Donna Byrne Quintet
April 5  Jimmy Mazzy, Eli Newberger and Friends
May 3  Condon Connection: Ed Polcer and Red Balaban