HANK JONES TRIO

HANK JONES, piano
JON BURR, bass
ALAN DAWSON, drums

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LIBRARY OF TRADITIONAL JAZZ

8 PM MONDAY
MARCH 28, 1994
STRAFFORD ROOM
MEMORIAL UNION BUILDING
DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE
THE ARTISTS:

THE HANK JONES TRIO

In the spring of 1948 a boy from neighboring Dover, about to graduate from high school, went on the customary class trip to New York. Memories of such things may fade, but the single event on that trip which increased in meaning for that boy over the decades was an early afternoon visit to the Paramount Theater in Times Square. The movie has long since been forgotten, yet the "stage show", in sight and sound, remains vividly etched in his consciousness—the Duke Ellington Orchestra, and Ella Fitzgerald. But the immediate occasion for recalling this particular memory as the aging boy writes these lines is that when Ella sang, the Duke yielded the piano to one Hank Jones.

Born in Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1918 and raised in Pontiac, Michigan, Hank is one of those rare beings who, cliché notwithstanding, has virtually "done it all" in the jazz and related worlds. His consummate professionalism and historical comprehensiveness are dramatically revealed by this partial list of people, etc., with whom he has been identified: Hot Lips Page, Andy Kirk, Billy Eckstine, John Kirby, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Garry Moore, Jackie Gleason, Ed Sullivan, Andy Williams, Jazz at the Philharmonic, CBS, "Ain't Misbehavin'".

Classically trained—who knows what might have happened in that realm as well but for the ignominious color line—Hank early became immersed in the pianistic world of Ellington, Earl Hines, Art Tatum, Teddy Wilson, and Fats Waller. Later, as the bebop dialect emerged, he was drawn to Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk. Ultimately his openness of mind and seriousness of purpose led him to develop a style rich in evolutionary reference, combining spontaneity with logic, elegance with understatement, and lyricism with harmonic interest. At 75 he sounds traditional yet modern, disciplined yet imaginative, and as one critic puts it so eloquently, "he has found a way to match personal voicings with impersonal grandeur."

Another component of Hank’s exquisite musical taste is his choice of truly swinging fellow travelers. Jon Burr continues the noble lineage of Milt Hinton, Ron Carter, and George Mraz; Alan Dawson need no introduction to UNH, some of us still being in a process of recovery from his spectacular visit with Clark Terry a few weeks ago. And one should not forget the authority of the blood lines; Hank is the older brother of drummer Elvin and the late trumpeter/arranger Thad.

A warm UNH welcome, Hank, especially from the boy who has waited 46 years to extend it!

(BONUS QUESTION: What other jazz luminary, mentioned on this page, is also a native of Vicksburg?!)
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The UNH Traditional Jazz Series began 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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